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LIVES AND EXPLOITS
OF
BANDITTI AND ROBBERS

IN ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD.

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Italian History."

FROM THE SECOND LONDON EDITION.

INCLUDING AN ACCOUNT OF
BLACKBEARD AND KID,

PREPARED FOR THE AMERICAN EDITION.

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PREFACE

BY THE AMERICAN EDITOR.

The Lives and Exploits of Banditti and Robbers, as published in London, contained some materials of but small interest to the general reader—inserted probably with a view of increasing the volumes to a required size. The American editor has taken the liberty of omitting some portion which he believed would not be read with zest, but has retained all that was worthy of perusal. A sketch of the lives of the noted pirates, Blackbeard and Captain Kid, has been added, as possessing much interest to the citizens of the United States, who have incidentally perused notices of the existence of these individuals, while the only authentic works, containing their biographies, have been long out of print.

Mr. Macfarlane has made a pleasant book; it will be observed that his materials are all genuine, and enlivened with much personal anecdote and adventure.

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GENERAL VIEW

OF

BANDITTI AND ROBBERS.

There are few subjects that interest us more generally, than the adventures of robbers and banditti. In our infancy they awaken and rivet our attention as much as the best fairy tales, and when our happy credulity in all things is wofully abated, and our faith in the supernatural fled, we still retain our taste for the adventurous deeds and wild lives of brigands. Neither the fulness of years nor the maturity of experience and worldly wisdom can render us insensible to tales of terror such as fascinated our childhood, nor preserve us from a "creeping of the flesh" as we read or listen to the narrative containing the daring exploits of some robber-chief, his wonderful address, his narrow escapes, and his prolonged crimes, seated by our own peaceful hearth. It is another thing when we hear of these doings on the spots where they have just occurred, and may occur again: for in that case the idea that we may adorn a future tale, instead of telling it, is apt to make attention too painful, and the effect produced will be too intense, and will exceed that

certain degree of dread and horror which gives us pleasure in romances, tragedies, and other efforts of the imagination. If we happen to be well protected at the time, and have a tolerable consciousness of security, then indeed we may doubly enjoy these tales on the spots—the solitary heath, the mountain-pass, or the forest—where the facts they relate occurred; but under general circumstances the exploits of a Pepe Mastrillo or a Mazzaroni will not be agreeable entertainment across the Pontine marshes or through the defiles of the Neapolitan frontier. I remember one dark night, in which, with much difficulty, we found our way from the Neapolitan town of San Germano to the village of Sant' Elia, in the bosom of the Apennines; that when a friend (my own companion) suddenly stopped and pointed out a place, and told the story of a robbery, and of a priest's having been murdered there a short time before, I could not help wishing he had kept his anecdote until we were ourselves in a place of safety—nor indeed help feeling rather uncomfortable until a white-faced chapel on the top of a little detached hill gleaming through the obscurity, showed us we were near the village we had been so long in search of.

But, to return to robber stories and their effects generally, it may be said that no species of narrative, except, perhaps, that of shipwrecks, produces a deeper impression on people of all ages and conditions. This conviction, and the circumstances of my having passed a number of years in the south of Italy—the land of brigandism *par excellence*—and of having repeatedly visited the wildest parts of that country, and possessed myself there of some curious details, induce me to collect my own materials, and by uniting them to the authentic statements of others, to produce, for a winter evening amusement, a sort of history of banditti.

Before the reader proceeds further, I will warn him, that he will not find my robbers such romantic, generous characters, as those that occasionally figure in the fields of fiction. He will meet with men strangers to that virtuous violence of robbing the rich to give to the poor. They give to the poor indeed, but it is as spies and instruments of their own crimes, or at least in order to induce the poor to remain passive while they carry on their work of depredation against the rich. It could scarcely be deemed great liberality in men, who, fresh from the easy plunder of a treasure, should scatter a few dollars among the needy peasantry; but even these few dollars are given from motives directly selfish. Among Italian banditti, I never could hear of a Robin Hood, and still less of a refined metaphysical "Robber Moor," that high-minded, romantic hero of Schiller, who is driven to bold villany by the paltry, covert vices of society.

The effect Schiller's tragedy of "The Robbers" produced on the romantic youths of Germany is well remembered; they became enamoured of a brigand's life, and thought the loftier and more generous virtues incompatible with a life of dull honesty and submission to the laws of society. But the *beau idéal* that deluded them was only ideal, and in reality robbers no more deliver touching monologues to the setting sun, than they unite elegance and virtue with violence and guilt; and when they took to the forest and the wild, and levied contributions (as several raw students actually did), they must soon have found they could qualify themselves for the gallows, without reaching the sublimities of poetry and sentiment elicited by the fervid imagination of the poet—who, be it recollected, was a stripling like themselves when he wrote "The Robbers."

The soberer minds of British youth were never led by

play, poem, or romance, to such a dangerous imitation ; but I can well recall the time, when, with others of my own age, I fancied it one of the most romantic things possible to be a captain of bold banditti, with a forest more leafy than Ardennes for my haunt, and a ruined abbey or castle, or inaccessible cave for my home—with followers so true that they would rather die piecemeal than betray their captain or a comrade, and with the enviable *finale* to every day's perils and adventures—of the jovial banquet, the song, the chorus, and the wild legendary tale, or recital of my own daring deeds. This was the dream of a boy ; but even when I was emancipated from the pleasant enthrallments of “The Bandit's Bride,” and similar productions, it was long ere I could divest brigandism of its cloak of romance, and see it in its own horrible nakedness. In my own particular case, which I dare say is not a singular one, the charm of banditti romance was strengthened and prolonged by the pictures of Salvator Rosa and the prints from that great master and from our own Mortimer ; and though I never went quite the length of a young friend, who, on seeing for the first time a savage, rugged mountain pass, with a torrent brawling through it, on the confines of Calabria, expressed a hurried regret that there were not a few of such figures as Salvator depicted, to make it complete ; still I rarely could see such a scene without fancying such figures, and as, between Spain and Italy, I wandered a good deal in my youth, in romantic scenery, the brigands by frequent association of ideas became familiar to me, and were invested with all the picturesqueness of nature and of the painters. In this manner they were still somewhat ennobled in my eyes.

But even this minor degree of illusion had considerably given way to time and experience, and the stories of

the vulgar atrocities of the banditti, which I had heard in Apulia, the Calabrias, the Abruzzi, and the Roman states, when chance brought me in contact and in safe colloquy with an ex-brigand, whose account of his own calling was well calculated to remove the slight degree of romantic feeling with which I could still reflect on the banditti.

It may be remarked here, that priests and monks have not done half the mischief which has been perpetrated by ballad-mongers, and story-tellers, and popular traditions, that have made the adventures of famous outlaws one of their favourite and principal subjects, and have described them rather with an eye to effect, than to truth or morality. Throughout Italy these ballads and stories are almost as numerous as accounts of miracles and legends of saints. They are among the first things learned in childhood; their continual repetition familiarises the mind with lawless deeds, whilst their spirit of adventure has a strong fascination for a very sensitive and very ignorant people.

"Let who will make the laws of the country," says the Scotch patriot, Fletcher of Saltoun, "let me make the ballads, and I will form the people." A little reflection will show how much is contained in this remark. Were a proof required to support it, I would point to the nature of the general run of Italian ballads and to the character of the Italian people. And were I a despot as potent as a Chinese emperor, I would decree the destruction of all their ballads relating to brigandism, and would punish every teller of a story or a tradition on that subject—at least until the country were civilised, when they might be "said and sung" with no more evil consequences than attend the singing or recital of "Johnnie Armstrong," or "The bold Robin Hood," among us.

The great civilisers of countries are your road-makers.

A MacAdam in Calabria would do more in suppressing banditti than twenty sanguinary governors, such as the the French General Manhes, whose proceedings I shall have occasion to detail. Wherever good communications have been opened, the brigands have gradually withdrawn. This I have seen myself in Calabria, in Apulia, and in the Abruzzi. That this indeed *should* be the case will strike every body, but it is so in a degree which can hardly be understood by those who have not seen it. The sight of a new broad road seems to produce the same bewildering, terrifying impression on an Italian robber, that the magical mirror of Ruggiero did on the eyes of his enemies.

I remember once having to pass a district (not far from Taranto, the ancient Tarentum) which had long borne an infamous reputation. On speaking to a gentleman of the country, he assured me there was now no grounds for apprehension—that the government had finished a *strada nuova* three months before, and that not a single robbery had been heard of since. Indeed, I almost invariably observed in travelling in the provinces of the kingdom of Naples, that the spirits of my guides or muleteers revived as we came to a bit of new road, and that they spoke of it as a haven of safety.

Hoping these brief general observations may not have fatigued the reader's patience, I shall now proceed to the most amusing and authentic narratives of banditti I can collect, begging him to bear in mind that robbers, like the heroes before the time of Homer, are frequently lost in obscurity—that history has disdained to record their exploits, which are only to be collected in the scenes which witnessed them, and from the occasional accounts of travellers.

THE ROBBER OF THE ABRUZZI.

“Of no avail,” says the excellent Neapolitan historian Giannone, “was the horrid spectacle of the tortures and death of the chief Mangone; for very shortly after the kingdom was disturbed by the incursions of the famous Marco Sciarra, who, imitating Marcone of Calabria, called himself ‘*Re della Campagna*,’ or ‘King of the open country,’ and asserted his royal prerogative at the head of six hundred robbers.”

Favoured by his position in the mountains of the Abruzzi, and on the confines of another government—the papal states, which for many years have been the promised land of brigandism—this extraordinary robber attained the highest eminence in his profession. His band, so formidable in itself, always acted in concert with other bands of banditti in the Roman states; they aided each other by arms and council; and in case of the Romans being pressed on their side, they could always retreat across the frontier line to their allies in the Abruzzi, while, in the same predicament, the Abruzzese could claim the hospitality of the worthy subjects of the pope.

The same circumstances have strengthened the banditti in our own days, and rendered the country between Terracina and Fondi, or the frontiers of the papal states,

and the kingdom of Naples, the most notorious district of all Italy for robbers.

But Marco Sciarra was moreover favoured by other circumstances, and he had the grasp of mind to comprehend their importance, to avail himself of them, and to raise himself to the grade of a political partisan—perhaps he aimed at that of a patriot. His native country was in the hands of foreigners, and most despotically governed by viceroys from Spain, who were generally detested by the people, and frequently plotted against by the nobility, who, instead of assisting to put down the *fuorosciti*, would afford them countenance and protection, when required, in their vast and remote estates. A great part of the rest of Italy was almost as badly governed as the kingdom, and consequently full of malcontents, of men of desperate fortunes, who, in many instances, forwarded the operations of the robbers, and not unfrequently joined their bands. An accession like theirs added intelligence, military skill, and political knowledge, to the cause of the rude mountaineers of the Abruzzi.

In the course of a few months after the death of Benedetto Mangone, Marco Sciarra had committed such ravages, and made himself so formidable, that the whole care of the government was absorbed by him, and every means in its power employed for his destruction.

In the spring of 1588, he had retreated with his band, before a force of government troops, into the states of the Church, which the vice-royalists could not invade without the permission of the pope. In the month of April the viceroy, Don Giovan di Zunica Conte de Miranda, applied to the Holy See for an immediate renewal of an old *concordaty*, by which the commissaries and the troops of either government were authorised to have free ingress and egress in the Neapolitan kingdom and the papal states, to pursue robbers, crossing the respective frontiers

as often as might be necessary, and by which the two states were pledged reciprocally to aid each other in the laudable duty of suppressing all bandits. Sixtus VI. complied with this reasonable request, by granting a breve for three months. Immediately the troops of the Viceroy Miranda crossed the frontiers in pursuit of Sciarra, who, being properly informed by numerous friends and spies of all that passed, turned back into the kingdom about the same time that his enemies quitted it; and avoiding the pass of Antrodoro, where the Spaniards were in force, he was soon safe in the mountain.

The robber had the sympathies of all the peasantry on his side, and found friends and guides every where. Not so the Spanish commander in pursuit of him, who did not learn whereabouts he was for several days, when some fugitive soldiers brought him word that Marco Sciarra was in the kingdom, and had just sacked the town of Celano, cutting to pieces a detachment of troops that had arrived there. The Spaniard then recrossed the frontier, but nearly a whole day before he reached the country about Celano, Sciarra was again beyond the borders.

He had now, however, considerable difficulties to encounter. The officer had left a body of bold men behind him in the papal states, and these had been joined by several commissaries of the pope, who each led a number of soldiers, and carried with him his holiness's command to the faithful, not to harbour, but to assist to take the Neapolitan banditti wherever they might be. Sciarra had not expected so formidable an array on the side of Rome against him: he was several times hard pressed by the troops, but the peasantry, spite of the injunctions of the successor of Saint Peter, still continued his faithful friends. The historians who relate these events, especially record that, wherever he went, the robber was kind in conversation and generous in action with the

poor, giving, but never taking from them; and paying for whatever his band took with much more regularity than did the officers of the Spanish troops. Consequently he was advised by some peasant or other of the approach of every foe, of every ambuscade of the troops, of every movement they made; and he finally escaped them all, keeping two forces, which might almost be called armies, at bay, the one on the Roman confine, the other on the Neapolitan, for more than a week.

He then threw himself back on the mountains of Abruzzi, where, by keeping himself in the most inaccessible places, with his men scattered in the most opportune spots, and regular sentinels stationed and guards distributed, he had invariably the advantage over the enemy. Indeed, whenever the troops mustered courage to approach his strong holds, which he was in the habit of changing frequently, they were sure to return considerably diminished in number, and without the satisfaction, not only of killing, but even of seeing one of the robbers, whose arquebusses from behind rocks, or the shelter of forests and thickets, had so sure an aim.

Six months passed—the soldiers were worn out. The Spanish officer, who first led them on the useless hunt, was dead in consequence of a wound received from the robbers. Winter approached, which is felt in all its rigour on the lofty bleak mountains of the Abruzzi; the commissaries with their men, on the other side, had long since returned to their homes at Rome; and the viceroy's people now went to theirs at Naples.

After these transactions, Marco Sciarra was deemed all but invincible: his fame sung in some dozen of ballads, strengthened his *prestige* in the eyes of the peasantry: his band was reinforced, and he was left to reign a king, at least of the Abruzzi, and undisturbed for many months.

It was about this time that the robber chief's life was ornamented with its brightest episode. Marco and his merry men had come suddenly on a company of travellers on the road between Rome and Naples. The robbers had begun to plunder, and had cut the saddle-girths of the mules and horses of the travellers, who had speedily obeyed the robbers' order, and lay flat on the earth, all save one, a man of a striking and elegant appearance.

"Faccia in terra!" cried several of the robbers in the same breath, but the bold man, heedless of their menaces, only stepped up to Marco their chief, and said, "I am Torquato Tasso." "The poet!" said the robber, and he dropped on his knee, and kissed his hand; and not only was Tasso saved from being plundered by the mere mention of his name, but all those who were travelling with him were permitted to mount their horses and continue their journey without sustaining the loss of a single scudo. A very curious proof this, that a captain of banditti could form a juster and more generous notion of what was due to the immortal, but then unfortunate poet, than could princes of royal or imperial lineage.

The viceroy was stung to the quick by the failure of his expedition, of whose success he had been so certain, that the court of Spain was given to understand their kingdom of Naples had nothing more to fear from the incursions of banditti; that the head of Marco Sciarra would soon decorate one of the niches in the Capuan gate. But Miranda was a man of energy, and in 1590 he renewed his attempt to exterminate the robbers. Four thousand men, between infantry and cavalry, marched this time into the Abruzzi, under the command of Don Carlo Spinelli. As the Abruzzese peasantry saw this formidable army enter their pastoral districts by Castel di Sangro, and traverse the mountain flat, "the plain of

five miles," they whispered: "The will of God be done! but now it is all over with King Marco!"

Marco Sciarro, however, had no such fears: but came boldly on to an open battle. With his increased forces he threw himself upon Spinelli in the midst of the viceroy's troops, which were presently disordered; he wounded with his own hand the proud Don, who turned and fled, but so severely wounded, that he was well nigh leaving his life in the mountains whither he had gone to take that of Sciarra. The soldiers followed their commander as best they could, leaving the robbers the full triumph of the field.

Marco Sciarra's courage and audacity were now increased a hundred-fold. He fancied he could conquer a kingdom; he invaded other provinces, and marching across the mountains of the Abruzzi, he traversed those of the Capitanata, sacking, without meeting with opposition, the towns of Serra Capriola and Vasto. Nor did he stop here: for he descended into the vast plain of Apulia, and took and pillaged the city of Lucera, a very considerable place, situated near the edge of the plain. The bishop of Lucera, who fled for refuge to one of the church towers, was unfortunately shot, as he presented himself at a window or loop-hole to see what was passing. Without being molested by any attack of the government troops, Marco Sciarra's band leisurely returned from this extensive predatory excursion, loaded with booty, to their Abruzzi mountains, which overlooked Rome, where their enterprising chief renewed his league with the banditti in the states of the pope, and encouraged them by the flattering picture of his splendid successes. But he had allies more important and dignified than these. The politics of states now became mixed up with his fate.

Alfonso Piccolomini, a nobleman by birth, but one of

the many desperate revolutionists Italy has been fertile in the production of—a rebel to his sovereign the grand duke of Tuscany—had fled to Venice, where he obtained service as a soldier of fortune in the army with which that republic was then waging war with the Uscocchi. This man was enchanted with the stand Sciarra had made against the pope and the viceroy, neither of whom, at the time, was in good odour at Venice; and he induced the crafty senators to wink at his corresponding with, and favouring the bold Abruzzese, if he did not even do more, and (working on their jealousies of the power of the Spaniards and of the pope in Italy,) persuade them to assist the outlaw themselves with money and arms.

Marco Sciarra was every day gaining importance and strength by these manœuvres, when a curious change took place. Here I entreat attention to the vindictive feelings, the utter want of principle, of decency, that marked the proceedings of princes and potentates in Italy in those days.

The grand duke of Tuscany, entertaining the most revengeful feelings against his rebel subject, made it a matter of embassy and degrading supplication to the Venetians that they would not only dismiss from their service, but drive out from their states, Alfonso Piccolomini. But Piccolomini, it was replied, was a man of talent, and as a soldier they were well satisfied with his services.

Marco Sciarra, the Abruzzese (he did not blush to propose a brigand!) was the better man of the two to carry on their wars against the Uscocchi, rejoined the duke, who did all he could to make them substitute him for Piccolomini. The Venetians, however, turned a deaf ear to these representations, and the Tuscan refugee could defy the wrath of his sovereign as long as he enjoyed their protection. But in an evil hour Piccolomini

returned a haughty, if not an insulting answer to the Capi, or heads of that mysterious, sanguinary government. The senators of Venice were almost as vindictive as the duke of Tuscany; they dismissed him from their service, and drove him out of their states—when he fell into the snares laid for him by his own sovereign, who put him to a violent death.

The oligarchy of Venice then thought of Sciarra, and sent to invite him to their service. He was to prosecute the war against the Uscocchi. But Sciarra, for the present, turned as deaf an ear to their proposals as they had at first done to that of the grand duke's, and remained where he was—the lord of the Abruzzi. He was not long, however, in finding that in the death of Piccolomini, who had so materially assisted him, he had sustained a severe loss, and Sciarra's fortunes were still more overcast when Pope Sixtus died and was succeeded by a better or more active pontiff, Clement VIII. The new pope shared all the feelings of the viceroy of Naples, as far as regarded the banditti, whom he determined to extirpate in his states. To this end he despatched Gianfrancesco Aldobrandini against them, with a permanent commission.

By a simultaneous movement a large body of the viceroy's troops entered the Abruzzi. The command of this, with absolute power, was given to Don Adriano Acquaviva, count of Conversano, a nobleman of courage and very admirable prudence. The first thing he attempted, and without which little indeed could be done in that wild country of mountains and forests, was to conciliate the affections of the peasantry, who had been so insulted and oppressed by all his stupid predecessors in office, and the soldiery, that they could not but wish well to their enemies, the robbers. The count, therefore, abstained from quartering his troops in the villages;

he imitated the conduct of Sciarra, and made them pay for whatever they consumed; he listened to the complaints of the aggrieved, and at last he so gained on the affections and better principles of the peasants, that they conspired with him for the extermination of the very banditti whom they had so often guided and concealed. With them, as guides, the soldiery had now a key to the mysteries and recesses of the mountains and forests.

Thus deprived of the protection of Piccolomini, pressed by Aldobrandini on the one side and by Conversano on the other, Marco Sciarra was fain to reflect on the tender made to him by the Venetian senators, and finally to accept the rank and service they offered him. They must still have thought him and those he could bring with him well worth having, for they despatched two galleys of the republic for their conveyance. In these ships Marco Sciarra embarked with sixty of his bravest and most attached followers, and, turning his back on his native mountains, sailed up the Adriatic to Venice. As soon as the Count of Conversano was informed of the robber chief's departure, he blessed his stars that the kingdom was quit of so dangerous a subject, and thinking now his business was over, returned to Naples, where the viceroy received him in triumph.

But the expatriating bandit left a brother behind him in the mountains of the Abruzzi; and Luca Sciarra, in due time gathered together the scattered bands, and commenced operations anew with considerable vigour. Meanwhile Marco and his men, who in their quality of subsidiaries served the Venetian republic very much to its satisfaction, corresponded with their former comrades at home. Marco's glory could not be forgotten! The soul of their body was at Venice—every thing of importance was fomented by him, and he frequently employed his

“leaves of absence” in visiting them, and leading them, as of yore, in the more hazardous of their enterprises.

He had now been heard of so long—his deeds had been so desperate but successful, he had escaped so many dangers, that people concluded he must bear “a charmed life.” His long impunity might almost have made him think so himself, when, landing one day in the marches of Ancona, between the mountains of the Abruzzi and that town, where the pope’s commissary Aldobrandini still remained, he was met by a certain Battimello, to whom, as to an old follower, his heart warmed—with open arms he rushed to embrace him—and received a traitor’s dagger in that heart.

Battimello had sold himself to Aldobrandini, and received for himself and thirteen of his friends, a free pardon from the Papal government for his treachery. For some years after the death of Marco Sciarra, there was a pause in his profession, whose spirit had expired with him. Other times brought other robbers, but his fame has scarcely ever been equalled—never surpassed.

THE BRIGANDS OF CALABRIA.

Such was the indomitable spirit of the Calabrians, that when King Murat was at the extremity of their peninsula with a formidable French and Neapolitan army, with which he was to beat the English and take Sicily, they again revolted and rose in his rear. His communication with the capital was continually intercepted, and he was obliged to detach several battalions from his camp to proceed against the brigands, and keep the roads open. The author of the *Letters upon Calabria*, a French officer, as one who had experience in these matters, was ordered to march back, and he turned his eyes with deep regret from that island of Sicily, of which the French made so sure, but which they were never to get! When he arrived in the district of Castrovillari, which is situated at the entrance into Calabria from the side of the capital, he found the whole country in the hands of the brigands, or insurgents. The inhabitants of the villages bordering on the mountain of Campotemesse intercepted all communications, and plundered all the money forwarded to the camp, unless it was protected by a very powerful escort. Our author's battalion set about occupying the mountain passes with intrenched posts. This

service presented great difficulties in consequence of the nature of their positions, and the character of the inhabitants, which was still more wild and ferocious than in the other parts of Calabria; and, moreover, the French were not at all acquainted with this part of the peninsula. The first place they halted at was Marmano. Here all seemed quiet; but at night three soldiers having gone out from a church where they were quartered, were at once poniarded. The syndic, or principal magistrate, and six other leading characters, were arrested, and because they could not, or would not discover the assassins, were detained as prisoners. Leaving behind a body of troops in a convent, as a point of retreat in case of need, the author of the Letters and the rest of the French set forward to scour the insurgent villages. They traversed some frightful mountains and yawning gorges. The continual dread of ambuscade made their march very slow. The old, the sick, and helpless alone were found in the miserable villages through which they passed; all the rest fled at their approach. It was necessary to know where these were assembling; and to this end the advanced guard seized two ferocious looking beings employed in tending flocks, real savages, whose mountain jargon it was almost impossible to comprehend. After threatening these fellows with death, the French contrived to learn from them that a gathering of several thousand men waited their approach in a defile which they must necessarily pass. The French advanced with rapidity, and by making a detour, forcing their way through almost impervious woods, they came, unexpected, on a multitude of peasants who were lying on the ground, most of them fast asleep, and all without order or preparation for defence. A volley set them to flight, killing and wounding, however, some of them. The French pursued them at the bayonet's point to a deep

dell, at the extremity of which stands the village of Orsomarzo.

“It would be extremely difficult,” says the author of the Letters, whom I leave to narrate this last and most desperate of his adventures in Calabria, “to meet with any situation more sublimely terrific and extraordinary than the spot where this village lies engulfed. Surrounded on all sides by gigantic mountains, terminating in conical points, it seems, as it were, placed at the bottom of a vast well. The descent is by a steep flight of steps, following the windings of a torrent, which rushes down with a loud roaring, and forms grand cascades. This torrent runs through the village, whence, finding vent in the narrow cleft of a rock, it fertilises a fine well cultivated country, which presents a most striking contrast with the horror inspired by this hideous abyss. It appears inconceivable how any human beings could ever have thought of fixing their abode in such a place. The path which follows the course of this torrent is cut through the rock; and it is impossible to engage in any conflict there with safety, unless the heights are entirely commanded at the same time. After having guarded the principal entrance of this savage retreat, by a detachment placed on the top of the only mountain on which a body of troops could be stationed, but which, unfortunately, was rather too far distant, we went down the gulf, to Orsomarzo, to look for provisions, never once imagining that the peasants, whom we had so lately routed, would venture to show themselves again, during that day. We found the village quite deserted: every thing in it indicated the precipitation with which the inhabitants had fled from their homes. The doors of the greater part of the habitations were wide open, and we found in the houses provisions of every kind. While we were employed in collecting a stock, which

should serve us for several days, we heard some shots fired, and at the same instant the surrounding mountains were occupied by a multitude of armed men. The detachment stationed at the entrance of the defile had just been attacked, and obliged to abandon its position, after having many men killed and wounded; at the moment we were advancing to its assistance, it was obliged to turn towards the village with the utmost precipitation. The peasants, who were in close pursuit, had nearly established themselves before us, so as to cut off all escape from this cut-throat abyss, where we were all now crowded together without any hope of being able to open a passage on that side. The detachment then hastened to the other outlet, where it was received with a shower of stones, and enormous pieces of rock hurled down from the top of the mountain. The latter crushed before my eyes two sappers and a drummer. Seeing that we could not encounter our murderous assailants in this passage, without the risk of utter destruction, we came to the resolution of hazarding every thing else to rescue ourselves from so dreadful a situation. Balls were showered upon us on all sides, and the piercing screams of women sounded horribly in our ears—screams which appeared to us those of the Furies impatiently waiting the moment when they were to feast upon our blood. The drummers beat the charge, and we rushed towards this fatal spot with the energy of despair. The light company having crossed the torrent under a shower of balls, with extreme difficulty climbed up the steep side of a mountain, whence the incessant fire of the brigands caused us considerable loss; and at length these brave men succeeded in opening a passage for us, which nothing but the most desperate necessity could render practicable. The moment we gained the heights, our soldiers, absolutely furious, rushed after the Calabrians with

all the impetuosity of rage. The greater part of them escaped, but a numerous group assembled on the point of a rock were massacred on the spot, or perished by flinging themselves down the precipices. This unfortunate check has cost us upwards of sixty men; and, moreover, many of us have wounds and contusions, and balls that are not yet extracted. We marched during a part of the night on our return to the convent at Mormano, before these peasants (the most determined of any we had yet encountered in Calabria) could have time to intercept us. We entered the town to the beat of drum."

The French always make the best of their reverses, and never acknowledge a defeat; but here, according to the officer's own showing, they were soundly beaten; and if credit is to be given to some people of the country I have heard speak on the subject, the affair at Orsomarzo was still more serious than he has represented it. This was shown, indeed, by the effect produced. The insurrection spread, and the commander of the battalion was obliged to beg for reinforcements.

But shortly after this, Murat, returning humbled from his vain-glorious, futile attempt on Sicily, having embarked at the little port of Pizzo,* to creep along shore towards Naples, was driven by the British cruisers under the battery of Cirella, which place, only a few days before, had been attacked and nearly taken by the Cala-

* It was at this place that Joachim Murat was taken and shot when he made his mad attempt to regain his kingdom. Never was madness equal to his landing in Calabria, where, of all parts of the kingdom, the French were most thoroughly detested. Poor fellow! he had been the bravest of the brave; a man, too, with many kind and amiable qualities, and if he at all merited the death of a dog, he met with in the filthy courtyard of the gaol of Pizzo, (where, little more than a year after the event, I stood on the spot where he fell,) it was by his having presided over the foul execution of the Duke D'Enghien.

brians. Here he communicated with the commandant of the station, our author's superior officer, and having praised the conduct of his troops, said that, after three years' hard service in such a country as Calabria, it was high time they should change quarters. He made a characteristic remark on the unfortunate business of Orsomarzo,—“Why did you go down into that cut-throat place?—However, you came up again like brave fellows!” and then, as soon as the English frigates let him, he continued his voyage along shore. The author of the Letters and his comrades soon went after Murat, following the movement of the army which returned to Naples by land; and he expresses his natural delight to be at last released from a wretched exile, and from a species of warfare which offered neither glory nor promotion, and left nothing in the end save disastrous chances.

On turning his back on the mountains and brigands of Calabria, of which, it must be confessed, he has given us some interesting details, he informs us of the French plans for future proceedings there. “Extraordinary measures of severity are now to be resorted to—measures unfortunately rendered necessary by the deplorable situation of the country, but the execution of which will always be repugnant to Frenchmen. It has been clearly proved, that, notwithstanding all our courage, activity, and perseverance, still we contend with great disadvantage against men born in the country, lightly armed, supported by a part of the population, and accustomed from their infancy to shoot with a deadly aim. These considerations have induced the government to resolve upon adopting a new system, according to which the troops are only to be employed in compelling the inhabitants to extirpate the brigands of themselves, under penalty of being regarded as their accomplices and abet-

tors. For this purpose, ten thousand men are to be spread over the two provinces," &c. — — —

And this new system was, indeed, soon set at work, and these extraordinary measures of severity soon deluged Calabria anew with blood. In the French General Manhes, Joachim Murat found the very man to superintend or direct these massacres *en masse*, and the Calabrians the most ruthless enemy that had ever been let loose upon them. I have heard stories in the country that would make humanity shudder—for the sake of that officer, (he is still living,) I hope these were untrue or immensely exaggerated. Yet it remains undisputed, and has even been admitted by those who served under him or with him, that Manhes was a cruel, pitiless man to the Calabrians, the people of the Abruzzi, &c. and acted up to a system of blood without once relenting. No mercy was ever extended to the outlaws who fell into his hands. Villages, whole towns, through which the inhabitants had allowed the brigands a passage, felt his tremendous vengeance. Any peasant, without distinction of sex or age, who was found going out to labour in the country, with more than a small flask of wine and a morsel of bread, calculated to be just sufficient to support life for one day, was taken and shot; for Manhes, having made pretty sure of the towns and villages, whence the brigands could no longer supply themselves, thought, if he could prevent the peasantry from smuggling out provisions to them, that they must either surrender themselves, or die of want in the mountain fastnesses to which he had driven them. If an honest man concealed, or corresponded with, or aided the escape of an outlaw—no matter, were it his own father, or son, or brother, he was forthwith executed. On one occasion, when a condemned brigand had escaped from the capella, or chapel, where it is usual to place criminals the night before their execu-

tion, he shot the priest who had been with him, alleging that he must have aided the robber in his flight.

By unusual severity like this, Manhes boasted he put down brigandism in Calabria. The boast was partly made out by fact.

THE VARDARELLI.

Three brothers of this very respectable name enjoyed a higher and a longer celebrity than any, even of the Calabrian banditti, and may, perhaps, be entitled to the rank of the first brigands in modern times, of Naples—*i. e.* of Europe.

Hitherto their deeds have not met with regular historians; but the following are among the stories regarding them, which I picked up in the country. They may be considered as contemporary records, for when I collected them, the brigand brothers were alive, and pursuing their vocation with admirable activity.

The Vardarelli were of the superior class of peasantry—good catholics, and faithful subjects of his Majesty Ferdinand IV.—at least, so they styled themselves, when, during the French occupation of the kingdom, irritated, some say, by the oppression of the foreigners, they took to the road, and levied contributions, after the manner of

their loyal countrymen in Calabria. They did not, it is true, confine their operations to the despoiling of the French and the officers of government—but then the mass of the Neapolitan nation became infected with Gallic principles, and untrue to the legitimate king—consequently amenable to the vengeance of the Vardarelli, as long as they had any thing to lose.

The birth place of these heroes was said to be somewhere in the mountains of the Abruzzi; but the spot where they first made themselves known as public characters, and which their exploits rendered famous for so many years, was the valley of the Bridge of Bovino—a long, narrow pass, through which runs the only road from Naples to the vast plains of Apulia, the province of Bari, Lecce, &c. I passed by the Ponte di Bovino early in the year 1816, when the mere mention of its name caused fear and trembling. I have been there several times since; the last time in 1824, when the vigilance and severity of General del Carretto had decorated it with the heads and mangled quarters of some half dozen of more modern, but less conspicuous brigands. It always struck me as being an admirable place for robbers—a circumstance equally perceptible to the people of the country; for though they have ceased since the days of the Vardarelli to form organized bands there, they have never failed *de tems en tems* to lie in ambuscade,* and

* The postilions here have always a dog with them, that is taught to run about a hundred yards a-head of the horses, and to bark if he see or scent anybody lurking near the road. These dogs are said to be remarkably sure and sagacious. If the postilions hear them bark, they turn their horses' heads and gallop back. I once underwent a retrograde motion of this sort, and I never travelled so fast in my life, as the last time I returned through the Val di Bovino, with the Prince D'I——, in the middle of the night. Spite of the ascent, the postilion, who seemed to be in a fever of affright, galloped his horses nearly all the way.

commit robberies. The pass is in general steep, and in some points very narrow ; a deep ravine, through which froths and roars a mountain stream in the winter season, is on one side of the road—hills covered with trees or underwood lie on the other. In its whole length, which may be about fifteen miles, there are no habitations, save some curious caves cut in the face of the rock, a post-house, and a most villanous-looking taverna, where, as I shall presently show, I once passed a night—and that, too, when my head was full of Mrs. Radcliffe, and banditti, and I quite new in the country. In some places the hill and the wood, or concealing thicket, is so close on the road on the one hand, and the ravine on the other, that it is really quite enticing. A shot from the one, and the man's business is done—and there yawns a dark, capacious grave, to receive his body when deprived of what it is worth. And then, as regards security, who would follow the experienced robber through the mountain wood, or down the ravine, or be able to trace him to the hiding places and holes in the rocks that abound there? Across the mountains he has a wide range of savage country, without roads—without a path: on the other side of the chasm the localities are equally favourable ; here he can, if hard-pressed and long, throw himself into the impenetrable forests of Mount Garganus, there into the not less remote and safe recesses of Monte Voltur.

Over the narrowest part of the valley, situated on the summit of a lofty and abrupt mountain, frown the dark walls of the town of Bovino, like the castle of a feudal chief—the more honoured robber of earlier times.

In this valley, then, the Vardarelli remained for many years, and many years will yet pass ere the traveller shall traverse it without hearing stories about them. During the short reign at Naples of Joseph Bonaparte, these rob-

bers were so formidable, they so entirely commanded the valley of Bovino, that rarely could a company of travellers pass without being stopped; a government officer, a government mail, or the revenue from the provinces, never without a little army for an escort. And all these troops were at times unable to afford protection, but were themselves beaten off, or slaughtered by the brigands. A journey to the capital from the Apulian provinces, was then to the peaceful inhabitants (always, be it said, rather timid travellers) an undertaking of solemn importance and peril; before embarking on which, not only were tapers burned under every saint of the calendar, and every Madonna that could show a portrait, but wills were made, and such tearful adieus, that one might have thought the Val di Bovino the real valley of death, or that the wayfarers were a forlorn hope going to storm a fortress, whose walls were cannon-ball and grape-shot, with gunpowder for their cement and their base.

Joseph Bonaparte once went through this pass to visit the provinces of his kingdom, situated beyond them. An immense force went with him, yet the robbers were heard to say afterwards, that had they known of the movement in time, they would have reinforced their troop with some other bands from the mountains of Basilicata and Calabria; pounced upon the king, and, God willing, carried him off, through the provinces just named, to Sicily, to King Ferdinand and the English. This might have been a mere bravado. The execution of such a plan would have been a splendid episode in the annals of brigandism.

It is to be remarked, that at this time the French confidently asserted, that the brigands here, as well as in Calabria, were protected and subsidised by the British government, and that the robber chiefs at the Ponte di

Bovino were in possession of commissions signed by George III.

Joachim Murat, who succeeded his brother-in-law, whom Napoleon chose to transfer to Spain, was a man of more energy than Joseph, and with infinitely less talent contrived to render his government more popular, and indeed better than his immediate predecessor's. He set to work vigorously against the robbers, whose party was weakened as his gained strength, and as the nation at large gradually believed that the dominion of the French was this time to be an enduring one, and began to forget old Ferdinand.

The excursions of the robbers were checked, or limited; they could no longer range whole provinces, but at the Ponte di Bovino they were almost inexpugnable; and such were the advantages of the position, and the talents of the leaders of the band, that they continued to levy occasional contributions, and to elude all the vigilance of the numerous *gens-d'armes* and police scattered over the country. At times, when they had not been heard of for weeks—for months—they would suddenly intercept the government *procaccio*, or carry off a party of travellers (known by them to be people of substance,) to their recesses in the mountains, where they would detain them until ransomed.

An event of the latter kind I had described to me at the not distant town of Foggia, by the Marchesa —, a native of the place, and one of the heroines of her own tale.

A marriage in the family was to take place—an important marriage, which, it was determined, from various considerations, should be celebrated at the capital. Accordingly, after due preparation, every thing was ready for departure:—bride and bridegroom, fathers and mothers, *compares* and *commares*, brothers and sisters, cou-

sins of both genders, relations of all degrees, and friends—a formidable caravan (numerically speaking) of itself, set off one fine morning from Foggia, with a valorous escort of Neapolitan gens-d'armes. They crossed the open plain, they reached the Ponte di Bovino—the robbers had not been heard of for a long time—all was quiet! The people at the post-house, near the bridge, at the mouth of the valley, gave the most satisfactory accounts—and on the party went. They went as far as the most convenient spot for a robber's attack, but no farther; for there the cries of "*ferma assassini*," "*faccia in terra*," were heard; the mounted gens-d'armes turned their horses' heads, and galloped off, and in the next minute the whole line of carriages was surrounded by the brigands, with their long guns in their hands, and their knives in their belts.

The general practice of these robbers, when no more than personal spoliation is contemplated, is to make their patients lie down on the ground, and then, while one set keep watch over them, with their guns double cocked and aimed at them, another set proceed to rifle them. But now the sufferers were surrounded by a portion of the robbers, and marched up the hill's side into the woods, where they waited until the "other gentlemen" had unpacked the carriages, and brought up the valuables. They then all set off together, and after a march, very fatiguing to the Foggia gentry—particularly to the poor ladies, they halted at a large, low hut, in the middle of a thick wood. They were forced into the hut, where they found a group of women and children, and a rogue in the dress of a Capuchin friar, playing at cards with an old beldam. There were two or three long benches in the hut, and on these, trembling and exhausted, the party sat down. Their apprehensions were of a very horrid nature. They expected something worse than robbery and captivity; for many of the banditti began

to drink wine, and to honour the ladies of the party with their very particular attention. My friend the Marchesa — was a younger woman then than when I had the honour of her acquaintance; the bride was very handsome, and more than one of the bride's maids were, at least, young. Just, however, as their alarm was reaching its most exquisite point, a noise was heard without the hut, and to the sounds of Don Gaetano, Don Ignazio, two men, better attired, and of superior mien to the rest of the robbers, entered the hut—and all was silent! They were two of the chiefs. Encouraged by the more humane aspect of these men, the husband of mine informant approached them, and begged for protection for himself and party—the ladies joined in his entreaties.

“You have nothing to fear, Signor Marchese,” said one of the chiefs, “you are in the hands of gentlemen, the faithful subjects of his Majesty Ferdinand IV. The Marchese expressed his satisfaction at the assurance, but begged he might be allowed to get out of such company, and continue his journey.

“We know you, Signor Marchese,” said the chief, “and that you can afford a good ransom. We must detain you here until one of your servants goes to Foggia, and returns with it to a place we shall appoint.”

This, to say the least of it, was a very uncomfortable prospect. The day was declining—it was impossible that the operations required by the robbers could be performed until the morrow, and there was no appearance of a single bed; the hut smoked, and smelt unpleasantly of mutton, for the women had commenced roasting a whole sheep, wool and all; in short, putting danger out of the question, and without calculating the number of ducats to be disbursed, it was a very uncomfortable prospect for the Marchese. He was feeling all this, when suddenly he was struck by the bronzed visage of a man

he thought he had seen before somewhere. The Marchesa thought so too, when told to look at him. As she looked, something like a tear came to the fellow's eyes; he threw his long gun in a corner, and, crossing the room, took the Marchesa's hand, and respectfully kissed it. It was Gaetano, once their servant, a man to whom they had behaved with great kindness, years before, at Foggia.

After a proper recognition, this robber took the captains aside, and talked to them with great earnestness. His eloquence was effective. A minute or two after, the chiefs told the Marchese that he and his companions might continue their journey, after leaving, in addition to what had been taken from the carriages, the property they had about them. There was a little murmuring among the robbers; but it was the will of the chiefs that so it should be! Their voices soon imposed silence. The gentlemen and ladies, glad to be off instantly at any cost, began emptying their pockets, and unburdening themselves of every thing, save essential clothing, under the eyes of the banditti, who contented themselves by passing their hands over their persons, to feel if nothing were concealed—just as a custom-house officer may do. The young bride, however, with all her fears, was very tenacious of a pretty pair of drop ear-rings. An impatient, brutal robber, stretched out his brawny hand, and pulled at them, until she shrieked with pain. On seeing this indecorous deed, one of the chiefs, without saying a word, raised the butt-end of his musket. It descended with tremendous force on the ruffian's arm, which instantly fell helplessly by his side. It seemed broken by the blow.

The fellow uttered a cry and a horrid oath, laid his other hand to the knife in his girdle; but he merely touched it, and slunk away to the farther end of the hut, feeling, perhaps, how injudicious it would be to attempt

avenging himself on a chief, and in such a place as that, where he was surrounded by men devoted to him.

The travellers then descended the hill, in matter and spirits much lighter than they ascended it. Their carriages were found where they had left them on the road, along which two or three peasants alone were riding on asses, secure in their own poverty, and indifferent to the scene of the empty carozze, and broken boxes, and scattered packing-cases, they had just passed, and perfectly well understood, for such things were common in those days at the Ponte Bovini.

The postilions and drivers were for the most part collected, after a little delay; the chiefs assured the company that, from the reputation of "brava gente," given to them by Gaetano, they were safe for the rest of their journey, and their return from Naples even; and La Signora Marchesa and spouse, bride, bridegroom, and all, set off as merrily as could be expected, up the pass, towards Ariana.

During the remainder of the reign of Murat, who was destined himself to be put to death like a brigand in Calabria, where his officers had committed such cruelties for the extirpation of banditti, this band prosecuted their calling with greater or less activity, according to circumstances. Many were the robberies they committed, but their acts of cruelty were few. Their favourite prize continued to be the *procaccio*, a kind of wagon, which travels night and day to the capital, with remittances from the receivers of the different provinces; it also carries merchandise, goods, parcels, and even passengers, and is generally escorted by an armed force.

"A famous captain of banditti," says K. Craven in his Tour, "who, during the latter part of the occupation of the kingdom of Murat, had successively gained possession of the contents of fourteen of these procacci, is said to

have brought them all to the legitimate sovereign (Ferdinand,) on his restoration, and to have obtained his pardon in consequence."

The same gentleman gives the following amusing incidents.

"Some years back, a gang, or, as it is called in the language of the country, a *comitiva*, of robbers, having seized the *procaccio* going from Naples to the principal town in the province of *Basilicata*, with all the paraphernalia appertaining to the court of justice, newly established there, thought it a very excellent joke to put on the judges' robes and wigs, and go through the mock ceremony of a trial; the judicial forms of which most of them were but too well acquainted with. This self-elected tribunal pronounced sentence of death on the very first traveller who might fall in their hands; and the day did not pass without an opportunity of carrying it into execution."

"At Orsara, a small village between Bovino and Troja; the usual amusement of the boys on a feast-day is to divide themselves into two bands, one of which guards a little wooden cart, filled with rubbish, representing the *procaccio*, while the other performs the more glorious part of the *comitiva*, which attacks it, and which, it is needless to add, always gains the victory." Bring up a child in the way he should go, &c.

When the important revolutions in Europe of 1814 and 1815 proved again the dictum of Ariosto, that the lily of France is destined never to take root in Italy, and Murat was hurled from his throne, the Vardarelli, as faithful subjects of his restored majesty Ferdinand, are said to have imitated the example of sundry of their *co-laborateurs*, and to have proposed renouncing their calling on conditions. But it is also said that the conditions were not agreed to by the government; and the

notorious fact is, that even when there were no more Frenchmen in the kingdom, the robbers of the Ponte di Bovino continued their depredations, paying no more respect to the revenue of Ferdinand, than they had done to Joachim's.

The first time I went through the valley of Bovino, was in the year 1816, not nine months after the happy restoration alluded to, and the Vardarelli were then in high feather. God knows I heard enough of them from my fellow-travellers long before I approached the spot; and for my further edification, when, crawling over the Apulian plain, which I thought was to have no end, we came in sight of the high mountains and the town of Bovino, and the dark looking gap beneath it, they recapitulated every horror. It was evening when we reached the post house by the famous bridge at the mouth of the valley. Here four miserable looking gens d'armes *à pied*, with their carbines slung over their shoulders, got up in front of our still more miserable looking vettura, for our protection. I could not help thinking that our poverty was our best protection, as related to such a respectable band as the Vardarelli. The living part of the cargo consisted of a fat mendicant friar, a student, an old Greek woman from Corfu, who seemed to be the grandmother of all the Greek priests in the city of Lecce, where I had embarked with her; a pretty *paesana*, who was going to see a brother at Naples, who had been promoted to the rank of sergeant in the royal guards; myself, and a run-a-way English sailor I had picked up starving at Barletta, and was carrying on to the capital. Of one thing I was quite sure—that the soldiers, in case the robbers condescended to assault us, would be the first to run away, and I would about as soon have given my three carlins to the robbers as to the gens d'armes, which I was obliged to do at the end of their ride. My

companions, however, were sorely afraid. The wild scene, and the time, and their whispering voices, (for the open-mouthed sonorous tones of the south had dropped into a general whisper as we went up the gloomy valley), did at last affect me, and I was glad when we reached our station for the night, the solitary taverna, though a more desolate, cut-throat looking place, can hardly be conceived.

The Rev. T. S. Hughes, one of the few English travellers that have gone through the valley of Bovino, and who must have passed somewhat more than a year before my first visit, gives this anecdote. "An occurrence had taken place connected with the very last journey of this vehicle (the *procaccio*) which threw all the country into alarm, and made every one advise us to proceed by sea to Naples. At a celebrated pass in the Apennines, called the Ponte di Bovino, a large corps of brigands, concealed behind the rocks, had fired a volley upon the carriage, killed the horses and postilion, burned all the letters, taken out an unfortunate officer, whom they shot on the spot, and carried away a still more unfortunate female to their haunts in the mountains. Traces of this outrage presented themselves to our eyes in numerous musket-balls at this time sticking in the body of the machine; but we judged it expedient to proceed immediately after the commission of such an act, since it was not very likely that it would be soon repeated. The terrors of our Italian companions amused us during the journey; but at the fatal pass their reason seemed almost overcome by their fears, which were not a little increased by a terrific thunder storm, whose echoes were finely reverberated among the rocks and valleys. We stayed at the post-house two hours before the storm abated, and when we arrived at the spot where the late attack had been made, we observed one of the horses lying by

the road side, and its flesh already half stripped from the carcass by birds of prey. As for the banditti, we saw none of them, except a few wretches bound with cords, in custody of the peasants, who, after this last outrage, had collected together in large bodies, headed by their priests, dispersed the villains from their haunts, and rescued the captive lady, much to the credit of Italian gallantry."

It was about a year after this that I was wandering in the same country, but in a different manner, for I had had enough of vetturini and their passengers. I had come on horseback from Lecce to Bari with the courier or post carrier, travelling the whole of one dark cold night and one day without stopping, except to change horses, and take a hurried morsel of food. This hasty way of proceeding would not suit for the rest of the country I wished to traverse, which was very interesting, and which I had never yet examined. So at Bari I determined to hire horses by the day, and from place to place, taking a man with the second horse with me, to return the beasts, and to act as my guide. I rode in one short delightful day from Bari to Barletta. Here again my ears were filled with tales of my old friends the Vardarelli, who had become naughtier than ever. Several people persuaded me not to continue my journey as I was doing, for I was now approaching their range of country, and I had some difficulty in hiring a man and horses. The next day, however, I struck over the plain of Apulia, visited the site of ancient Cannæ, and arrived in the afternoon at the town of Canosa, just in time to see a fight between some Carbonari and Caldarari, in which two men of the place were nearly killed, and one killed outright. What with factions and robbers this part of the kingdom of Naples was then in a pretty state!

I made Canosa my head-quarters for more than a

week, exploring the country thence every day, and returning to sleep at night. Whilst staying here, the following news was received one morning, and disconcerted a coursing match I had engaged in with some gentlemen of the town.

A Major ———, a Swiss officer of talent and well-known courage in the service of King Ferdinand, had been sent down to Barletta with a force of light horse and light infantry, to keep the robbers in check, and if possible to destroy them. In consequence of some concerted plan, or of some hints given him, he marched from Barletta to Cerignola, a small town on the opposite side of the wild plain, a day or two after I quitted the former place. Lying quiet and *perdu* at Cerignola, he had received information in the night of the day before the news reached us at Canosa, that the Vardarelli had advanced again into the open country, and had taken possession of a *masseria*, or farm house, not far off. He instantly put his men in motion, but it was daylight before he reached the *masseria*. The robbers were on the alert; they had not, however, time to saddle and mount before the place was surrounded by the troops, who might be about ten times their number. Major ——— thought he had them in a trap, and sent forward a non-commissioned officer to summon them to surrender. The answer of the Vardarelli was pronounced by a musket, which wounded the soldier, and sent him groaning to the rear. The Swiss then determined to storm the *masseria*, but the walls that surrounded it were high and strong, he had no artillery, and when his men approached the heavy entrance gate, the robbers within fired at them through loop-holes, resting their long guns in the little embrasures, with so deadly an aim, that two were left dead, three or four wounded; the rest ran back as fast as their legs could carry them. The bold Swiss then en-

couraged his troops as best he could, and headed a number of them in a fresh attack on the gate ; but his men were Neapolitans, the greater part of them slunk behind, and he himself was soon forced to fall back out of the robber's range of fire with a wound in the hand.

While storming from the pain he suffered, and at the pusillanimity of those he commanded, to his no small surprise Major —— saw the gate a few minutes after thrown open, and the robbers issue forth well mounted and armed. Almost before he could give the word of command to concentrate, the Vardarelli dashed through the line of the beleaguers, who made way for them, and galloped across the plain. He put his cavalry in motion after them ; but the men, protesting that their horses were no match for the fresh ones of the robbers, soon drew rein. The Vardarelli then halted, and after a shout of insulting triumph, calmly trotted off towards the mountains.

This event naturally made a great noise "all over the country," and as in prosecution of my journey I had to go through the valley of Bovino again, or into the very den of the robbers, innumerable were the warnings I received. A young lady of the house where I had been staying at Canosa, thought my peril so imminent, that in bidding me farewell, and recommending me to the Madonna's protection, and pronouncing in her patois, "God send you well through it!" absolutely shed tears. But I was eighteen years of age then, and tolerably adventurous ; and, not to put my courage in too prominent a light, pretty confident that the Vardarelli would not notice a whimsical traveller with nothing but a little portmanteau and a sketch-book at his back, and a few ducats in his pocket. (As for the steeds I procured, two such wretched hacks were never seen since Bolingbroke mounted King Richard.) Not to be too fool-hardy, however, as my friends

flattered me by saying I looked *troppo distinto* (too distinguished a personage) as I was, I procured a rough brown peasant's cloak, which I wore over my English garments, and substituted the high conical hat of the country for my travelling cap. This *travestimento* was very complete. My own mother would hardly have known me, and as I rode down the hill on which Canosa stands, I nearly tumbled over my horse's ears, by laughing at the figure I was cutting.

That evening I stopped at Castelluccio, a little village very near the Ponte di Bovino, with a reputation little superior to Bovino itself. As I rode into the village after my guide, a lazy cooper of Canosa, I met three fellows with long guns walking leisurely out of it. They stared at us, but did nothing but interchange the "*buona sera*" (good evening!) with us. My man of the butts and casks would have it they were robbers. It might have been so, for they were ill-visaged dogs, but they never troubled me, though the bugs at my hostel at Castelluccio did most cruelly.

On starting the next morning very early, my companion regretted that no chapel was open in the village where he could refresh his soul with a mass, and when we entered into the mouth of the valley, there was no end to his crossing himself. I rode through the Val di Bovino, however, just as safely as I had done the year before, and reached the lofty town of Ariana, where all danger from robbers was supposed to cease, just as the sun was setting on one of the most extensive and lovely scenes it has been my lot to observe.

Shortly after my arrival at Naples, I learned that King Ferdinand, whose reign had been marked by two flights from his capital and continental dominions, and numerous other humiliations, had set the final signet to his debasement, by treating with and finally signing an act of

capitulation with the Vardarelli, who were thenceforth admitted to his service and pay. The whole band was allowed to form a regular corps, still commanded by the same leaders, who received a monthly salary, and engaged to secure the valley of Bovino and the provinces which they had so long ravaged, from all similar attacks for the future. People in the capital stared at each other when this news was announced, and they reflected on the qualities of the contracting parties—a Bourbon prince, the king of the Two Sicilies, and an Abruzzese peasant, a brigand chief. But so it was! and even so weak was this despotic government.

“The most celebrated troop of robbers in our days,” says R. K. Craven, “was that of the Vardarelli, who invested the provinces of Apulia and the borders of Basilicata and Abruzzi, and were supposed to have collected immense wealth. To trace the progress of a life like theirs, would be a difficult but not uninteresting task: by turns, soldiers, deserters, partisans, and traitors—by turns, imprisoned, punished, penitent, restored to society, or relapsed into guilt—exhibiting traits of singular personal bravery, united to instances of the most extraordinary cunning—and occasional proofs of disinterestedness, contrasted with rapacity the most unbridled;—the recital of their adventures would by far surpass the legends of our most illustrious highwaymen, footpads, or smugglers.

“This band selected Apulia as the theatre best adapted to their system of depredations: its vast, uninclosed plains, occasionally interspersed with patches of underwood, but in no part offering obstacles to the rapidity of their movements; the rare occurrence of large towns; the magnitude of the farms or *masserias*, where they were sure to find provisions, forage, and booty united; all these circumstances combining with their local knowledge of the

country, and the terror which they had impressed on its inhabitants, had rendered their power sufficiently formidable to resist, or at least elude, the means pursued by government for their destruction. Well armed and accoutred, and excellently mounted, their troop was also trained to the most rigid discipline; and Don Gaetano, the elder of the brothers Vardarelli, as well as commander of the band, displayed an activity and skill worthy of a nobler profession. It should be observed that they seldom, if ever, attacked travellers; and their outrages were generally unsullied by cruelty, except in some cases of revenge for breach of promise: but this false glare of generosity and forbearance, as well as the ample rewards which they bestowed upon their spies and abettors, and the acts of charity by which they endeavoured to propitiate the feelings of the poorer class, rendered them only a more destructive scourge to the community at large. A person who had been a severe sufferer by their misdeeds very justly observed to me, that it was very easy to give a hundred dollars to the poor out of the thousands stolen from the rich; and as their generosity could be estimated by this rule only, the motives of it may be duly appreciated.

“The Apulian farms consist of several buildings appropriated to the different branches of rural economy, which the nature of the soil admits of; and the number of individuals employed in the various departments of labour is sometimes very great, especially during the winter season, when the cattle are all collected in the *masseria* for the sake of a milder abode. All these attendants and their superiors, including the *agente*, or what we should call the steward, reside within the walls which always enclose these establishments. The reader may easily form some idea of the panic spread by the appearance of the Vardarelli in one of these colonies,

composed chiefly of timid shepherds and their families, or labourers, as unused to the exercise as they are unprovided with the means of resistance.

"The robbers' marches, generally performed in the night-time, were so incredibly rapid, that the terror they inspired was equalled only by the astonishment created by operations apparently supernatural; and they have been known to have remained two or three days in one of these farms, before the inmates of those adjoining have been aware of their proximity. During this time they usually feasted on whatever the premises afforded, always obliging their inhabitants to partake of the fare prepared for them, through fear of poison. On an occasion of this nature, when the principal agents of the farm excused themselves from eating meat because it was a fast-day, Don Gaetano approved their abstinence, which, he assured them, quite agreed with his practice in general; but alleged his mode of life, and the uncertainty of his dinner hour, as an apology for the infraction of it. On removing from the scene of action, they always took with them what money could be collected, and as much grain as their horses could carry.

"Sometimes the demand, or rather command for forage, cash, provisions, and even clothes, was not made personally, but imposed through the medium of a letter to the superintendent of the farm. Neglect, or even delay, in complying with the summons, or the most distant appearance of treachery, was followed by the destruction of the cattle, and the conflagration of the buildings. In these cases the mandate was confided to a peasant or labourer, whom the troop might meet accidentally. Frequently they would stop passengers, and exact the exchange of good fresh horses against their own jaded ones; while more than once they have merely bartered their silver against an equivalent sum in gold,

which might be found upon the person of the traveller."*

For some time after their treaty with King Ferdinand, the Vardarelli very correctly kept their part of the engagement, and no robberies were heard of at the Ponte di Bovino, or in that neighbourhood. There was, however, a long accumulated account of vengeance scored against them in the hearts of many individuals who had suffered from their rapacity or violence; the government, moreover, was said both to fear that by some sudden revulsion they would adopt their old modes of life, and to nourish a vindictive feeling against the men who had foiled them so often. Indeed, it was currently reported in the capital at the time, that the quarrel in which the daring brothers fell, was excited by the treacherous emissaries of government, who thus hoped to rid themselves of the Vardarelli without the open odium of treachery and cruelty to men they had honoured with a capitulation. Either of these causes might have produced the effect, or it might very well have been produced by a union of the two. Mr. Craven only alludes to the more apparent one.

"But it was not to be expected that so lawless a confederation should long continue faithful to their engagements, or that the inhabitants, smarting under the infliction of outrages so recent, should ever look upon the authors of them with any feelings but those of mistrust or revenge: in fact, about a month previous to my quitting Naples, they had been engaged in a serious contest with the natives of an Albanian village, called Ururi, on the borders of the Abruzzo; and these last, rising in superior numbers, killed the three brothers with nine of the troop, and compelled the remainder to seek their safety

* Tour through the Southern Provinces of Naples.

in flight. It was said that the principal promoter of this affray had lost his father by the hands of the Vardarelli. From that period the remnant of the band had retired to the neighbouring mountains, and had, under various pretences, eluded the order which they received, to unite, and present themselves at a stated spot, where the affair should be investigated. Aware, probably, of having been the aggressors in the conflict which terminated so fatally to their leaders, or distrustful of the intentions of government, they had delayed obeying its commands; and I had purposely retarded my departure from the capital, to avoid the risk of falling in with them on their way to the head-quarters of the district, where it was expected that by this time they might in all probability have arrived. At Troja, indeed, I was induced to look upon this event as certain, for that portion of their corps, which was dismounted, consisting of about thirteen, had assembled there a short time before.”*

We are now come to “the last scene of all, which ends this strange eventful history,” and here Mr. Craven’s narrative possesses the interest that only an eye-witness can give.

“At last I arrived at Foggia, the capital of the Capitanata, which has gates, but no walls, the houses being so irregularly scattered about, that it is difficult to fix precisely where the town begins. I could find no lodgings at the numerous inns which displayed their signs on either side of me, but were already filled by the arrivals for the ensuing fair, so that I had penetrated some way into the city before there appeared any chance of

* In the streets of Troja, Mr. Craven saw two of the Vardarelli band, whose stature and martial air, heightened by a picturesque but irregular uniform, attracted his attention to a degree which his guide thought it prudent to repress, by informing him of their quality and profession.

being accommodated at all; when, just as I had turned out of a street, or rather square, in which I had observed some troops drawn out as for a parade, a sudden volley of musketry, which I took for the crash of a building falling, followed by a general flight of the inhabitants, uttering cries of terror and dismay, arrested my attention: soon after, a gentleman hurrying by, desired me to alight, which I did, though utterly unable to guess the motive of this advice; while a second as strenuously recommended my remounting my horse and galloping away. The first idea that darted across my mind was that of an earthquake, and a number of persons rushing at once out of an adjoining house tended to confirm it. I walked on, in vain addressing the fugitives who passed me in every direction, till a boy took my horse's bridle, and led him through some obscure by-streets to an inn at the skirts of the town, where we took refuge in a room on the ground-floor, into which my servants and guide, together with all the horses and myself, entered as if by one common instinct, but still in total ignorance of the cause of alarm. The cries of several women, tearing their hair, and the incoherent exclamations they uttered, among which I could only distinguish the word *brigands*, at last led me to conjecture that a party of banditti had forced their way into the town, and were engaged with the regular troops. The door had been carefully barricaded at the moment of our entrance; but through the small windows several soldiers were observable lurking about in parties, with their muskets ready, and at times a dragoon passed at full gallop, apparently engaged in pursuit. These circumstances, and occasional musket-shots, confirmed my suspicions; but that a gang of robbers, however daring and desperate, should have made an attack at mid-day on a large city respectably garrisoned, seemed so improbable that I continued in a state

of doubt, till the son of my hostess made his appearance; and after being repeatedly kissed and wept upon by his mother and her dishevelled companions, he gave me a clearer insight into the affair, by relating, in an imperfect manner, the details, which were subsequently made known to me from a source more authentic, and which are as follow.

“ The remainder of the Vardarelli band had presented themselves that morning at Foggia; they formed, in fact, part of the troops I had seen, and were at the moment I passed engaged in a war of words, which soon was waged with more deadly weapons. It seems that the general, who had received intimation of their arrival, gave orders for them to be inspected the instant it took place. After they had dismounted and given a satisfactory account of their late proceedings, they received directions to repair to Lucera, and there await further commands. This mandate they positively refused to obey, and a long altercation took place between them and an officer sent from the commander's house, before which they were ranged, to remonstrate on the imprudence, not to say temerity of their behaviour. The general finally commanded the two leaders to repair to his own apartment to speak to them: this they objected to do without their arms, which they declared they would never part from; and it is supposed that the language they made use of in the course of their argument so exasperated the officer, that he roughly pushed one of them back, who was using threatening gestures; on which the other fired his musket at him, but having missed his mark, was shot dead on the spot by the sentry at the gate. This was the signal of an attack from his companions, that was immediately answered by a round of musketry from the troops who were drawn out close to them, which killed several, and spread consternation

among the crowds of towns-people who had assembled on the spot. Four of the band, who had presence of mind to spring upon their horses, escaped in different directions out of the town, though followed by cavalry, and fired at as they fled. Another portion were made prisoners; but a third division sought security in a cellar, the first place of refuge which offered itself, and which having only one very low entrance, afforded them a defensible asylum for some time: the depth and darkness of this receptacle made it difficult to attack them with success, for they killed a soldier, and wounded several others who had ventured too near the aperture. Of this last desperate set, four, however, gave themselves up, and made known the number that remained. In order to bring as speedy a termination as possible to the dismay and agitation which this event had spread throughout the city, two of those who had been last taken were sent in to their companions with their hands tied to persuade them to surrender, and to inform them, if they persevered in a resistance, which, from the local nature of their retreat, must be unavailing, a straw fire would be lighted at the orifice, as the only means of hastening their compliance or destruction. The unfortunate men never returned, and no answer being given, this threat was put into actual execution, and the aperture blocked up with stones. Imagination pictures their situation as most horrible; but its terrors were eluded by the last resource of despair. Two hours afterwards the cellar was entered without opposition, and their lifeless bodies, covered with wounds, indicated the death they had received at each other's hands.

“In about five hours some degree of tranquillity was restored to the city; and it was evident that the feelings of alarm occasioned by this singular event, and even those of aversion and universal reprobation which the ex-

cesses of the banditti had excited, now yielded to emotions of compassion, called forth by so terrific and untimely a death. Even the policy which prompted this severe punishment met with comments and constructions by no means favourable to those whose duty it was to inflict it.

“In the evening the shops were re-opened, and I ventured to send my letters of recommendation to the general commandant of the division, and the intendente, who both showed me every attention and civility during my stay. But I had with me a document of similar import addressed to a very different character.

“On my leaving Benevento, one of its most respectable inhabitants, fearing I might encounter the Vardarelli troop on their way to head-quarters, gave me a letter of introduction to one of them, which he assured me would be the means of securing me from all such danger as the existing uncertainty of their projects and movements might render possible if not probable. The robber to whom it was addressed had been employed on a farm of the writer, and retained a friendly and even respectful feeling towards his former master, which had shown itself on several occasions since they had parted. Curiosity led me to enquire whether this person was among the survivors of the dreadful catastrophe of the morning; and having sent to the prison where they were confined, for the purpose of ascertaining the fact, I was answered in the affirmative, and conducted, as I imagined, to the cell which contained the object of my enquiries. It seems that the substance of my message having been conveyed from mouth to mouth, had undergone a material change in its purport; and before I was rendered aware of the misunderstanding, I found myself in a low vaulted room, at the back of the public prisons, and standing opposite to several naked bodies exposed on some straw. One of

these was pointed out to me as that of the individual whom I sought.

“The infliction of a sudden and violent death on a robust and active frame is far from producing those effects which the repeated attacks of disease, or the gradual decay of the vital powers, leave impressed in characters so awful or offensive on the human countenance. The setting rays of the same sun which had cast its morning radiance on beings moving in the full energy of existence, now shone on their lifeless but not inexpressive features. The turmoil of passions which had agitated the last dreadful moments of their existence was visibly, though variously, depicted in every face, nor could the expression be mistaken; the sullen brow strongly contracted over the glaring eyeball, the pallid lip curled to a sardonic smile, each bespoke the final agonies of desperate bravery, ineffectual revenge, or the hopeless struggles of expiring crime.

“The colour of the cheeks was fixed, but not extinct, and nought but the attitude was that of death. They had been stripped of every article, save the reliquaries, or consecrated images, which the lower classes in Italy invariably wear round their neck, and which now rested on the ghastly wounds that disfigured their bodies, some of which were also blackened by smoke. None of these men were above the age of forty, while most of them were considerably younger. It was said that individuals of every nation were to be found in their ranks; but I believe that a Frenchman and a Hungarian were the only two who were not natives of Italy.”

Thus ended the famous Vardarelli. The following amusing particulars are also from the pen of the gentleman who so vividly represented the scenes of their de-

struction. Mr. Craven went from Foggia to Cerignola, another town in the plain of Apulia.

A letter, which I had brought from Foggia to the syndic, procured me a visit from that gentleman, and an apology for some delay in making it, occasioned by the return of his brother from the adjoining province of Basilicata, where, only a few days before, he had been carried by a party of fourteen brigands. This had happened on the very evening of that day which witnessed the destruction of the Vardarelli, and though the parties had no connection with each other, the coincidence was remarkable. It seems that this *comitiva* was but lately organised, and had hitherto confined its practices within the boundaries of Basilicata, to which it belonged; but tempted by the reputed wealth of the syndic of Cerignola, the banditti had lain in ambush for a whole night, near a house and farm which he possessed, three miles from the town, and after waiting all the next day, which his brother had spent there, in the act of superintending the rural concerns of the family, they seized upon him and an attendant at dusk, just as they were preparing to go home; and, crossing the Ofanto, which, at no great distance from the spot, divides the two provinces, they forced him to walk thirty miles in the course of that night, to reach the mountain of Melfi. Here they halted among the woody recesses, which afforded them a secure retreat, and detained him, while they sent back his servant with the terms they fixed for his ransom, and powers to negotiate for its payment. The demand which they at first advanced was so exorbitant, that the wretched prisoner, aware of the inability of his relatives to raise a sum so considerable, assured them that they might as well kill him at once as require it. To this they very indignantly replied, that they were not wretches capable of committing murder, and assured him that he need fear

no personal injury; although they had, for the sake of expedition and safety, urged the speed of his nocturnal progress by occasional blows, and followed his person with slight but frequent applications of the well sharpened points of their stilettos. They lowered, however, their demands; and, after a few days' negotiations, agreed to liberate him for the sum of twelve hundred ducats, a hundred yards of velveteen for pantaloons, and several dozen of silver buttons and buckles for the same. The difficulty of purchasing these articles, without incurring suspicion, will account for their insertion as part of the ransom. If the reader asks how these treaties are carried into effect, and who the individuals are that act as negotiators, I can only say, that the principal sufferers are anxious to conceal the details of transactions forbidden by a law, which humanity and compassion always transgress. It is to be observed, that, except in revenge for treachery and evident breach of faith in the fulfilment of these agreements, the banditti have generally been found true to their word, while few among the unhappy objects of their rapacity have fallen victims to a spirit of wanton ferocity, and they are always restored for much less than the sum originally required. It is scarcely necessary to add, that I allude to this, not in extenuation of so abominable a practice, but merely as a custom which they probably adhere to so punctually, for the sake of inspiring greater confidence in their promises."

DON CIRO, OR THE PRIEST-ROBBER.

This extraordinary man, whose atrocities far exceed those of his contemporaries (and sometimes his friends) the Vardarelli, was born in the little Neapolitan town of Grottaglie. His parents, who were in easy circumstances, destined him for the ecclesiastical profession, which he entered very young. Having gone through the routine of a priest's education at the seminario and collegio, he was in due course of time ordained by the bishop of the diocess, and received the mass. The brothers of Don Ciro, most respectable farmers, and his uncle the Canon Patitaro, neither of whom ever took any part in his crimes, were alive and in the enjoyment of unblemished reputation a very few years ago, and are probably still living.

Don Ciro, even at an early period of life, showed very great talents—qualities indeed that might almost claim the high epithet of genius; but unfortunately he possessed also what so frequently accompanies genius, a most ardent and passionate temperament. With a disposition—a resistless impulse to love ever working within him, he was forbidden the indulgence of that most natural and potent of all passions by his sacred profession and his vows. Ciro Anicchiarico unfortunately became

enamoured of a lady, his own townswoman. This was the key to all his crimes. His passion was too impetuous to be concealed, and his townfolk talked lightly of him : a young man of the place, a schoolfellow, and once a friend, met with more favour in the eyes of the lady than the priest could hope for. *Ciro* saw evidences of this one day. He rushed out of the house, and providing himself with a gun, lurked behind a wall until his rival should approach. The young man came, but never went from the fatal spot. *Ciro*, who was even then a good marksman, shot him dead, and slunk away fancying to escape discovery. Some rumours, however, were soon raised by the *Motolesi*, the family of the priest's victim. *Ciro's* thirst for vengeance was not satisfied with one murder ; he had vowed to exterminate the whole family of the *Motolesi*. Their murmured suspicions perhaps hastened their fate ; and one after the other every individual of that house, save one, had disappeared from the little town of *Grottaglie*. (The individual who escaped lived shut up in his house for several years, without ever daring to go out, and the unhappy being, even fifteen years after the murder of his kindred, thought that a snare was laid for him when people came to tell him of the imprisonment, and shortly after, of the death of his remorseless enemy ; and it was with great difficulty that he was induced to quit his retreat.)

When he had gratified his revenge, and found that the tardy justice of his country was about to proceed against him, he fled from his native town. Whether he became a brigand then, does not appear ; but he shortly after played the part of a hero, for on learning that the government, ever injudicious and tyrannical, had thrown his innocent brothers into prison, " he flew," he said, " on the wings of fraternal love" to effect their release, and presented himself to the extraordinary judiciary commission

of Apulia sitting at Trani. The innocence of his brothers was made evident, and they were released, but all the ingenuity and eloquence of the abbé (for he had attained that sacerdotal grade) could not save himself. Capital punishment, however, was then rare in the kingdom of Naples, and convicted and manifold murderer as he was, he was only sentenced to the galleys for fifteen years. For four years he was confined in the most horrid dungeons, never being sent to the place appointed for his transportation, though he several times petitioned for that removal, which would have enabled him to breathe fresh air at least for a certain number of hours each day. It would be too horrible to reflect on the workings of a mind like his, in darkness and utter solitude—in a very hell! from which, as might be expected, he came out a fiend indeed!

At the expiration of the fourth year of his dreadful confinement he contrived to escape. But whither could he go without friends or money? The government of his country had now passed into the hands of the French, who exercised it with more energy than the old Bourbons. But the provinces, as I have already explained, were overrun by desperate men, in whom, for a long time, were confounded the characters of brigands and political partisans. The Abate Ciro, therefore, went and joined one of the most notorious of these bands, which soon acknowledged him as their chief, and grew in numbers and prospered under his guidance and fostering talents. Under other circumstances he might have been an excellent soldier—he turned out a most accomplished bandit. Not one of the band could fire his rifle with so sure an aim, or mount his horse like the priest Don Ciro. In the course of his vagabond and hard life, being obliged to hide for seasons in the most horrible holes of the rocks or depths of the forest, and not unfrequently suffering the

want of the merest necessities for human sustenance, he acquired a strength of constitution, a resoluteness of purpose, and an adroitness and cunning the most remarkable, even among men whose modes of life, of necessity, confirmed and strengthened the same qualities.

One of his first exploits, after escaping from the dungeons of Lecce, was to penetrate with his satellites into one of the first houses of the little town of Martano, where, after having offered violence to the person of its mistress, he murdered her, and all her people, and decamped with a large sum of ready money. This deed was followed up by numerous crimes of the like nature, until what with truth, and a little natural exaggeration, the amount of delinquencies was most fearful, and nothing was heard of but *Ciro Anacchiarico*. This was so much the case, that some years after, when he thought it expedient to send in a justification of his conduct, he said that, "whatever robbery, whatever murder, whatever assassination was committed on the face of the earth, was instantly attributed to the *Abate Anacchiarico*."

The extent of this reputation could not but be dangerous to him—yet he continued, year after year, to elude every pursuit, and to baffle the many hundreds of soldiers that were occasionally sent against him. He was always well mounted. A retreat of thirty or forty miles in a day, was as nothing to him—and even when confidential spies had revealed the place of his concealment but a few hours before, and his pursuers came upon him with the full confidence that they should take him at last, his skill and activity always served him at need, and he escaped. This singular good fortune, or rather talent, of being able to extricate himself from the most imminent dangers, acquired for him, among the people, the valuable reputation of a necromancer, upon whom ordinary means of attack had no power; and *Ciro*, becoming aware of

this, neglected nothing which could confirm the idea, and increase the sort of spell it produced upon the ignorant, superstitious peasants. The country people, indeed, soon carried their fears so far, that they dared not excrete, or even blame Don Ciro in his absence, so firmly were they persuaded that his demon would immediately inform him of it and render them obnoxious to his bloody revenge.

Meanwhile, a robber by profession—an unholy wizard in the imagination of other men—a devil in reality, Don Ciro never wholly relinquished his sacerdotal character; on the contrary, he would frequently perform its functions, celebrating the mass and other solemn rites to the banditti—who are generally found in Italy to have a strong relish for religion, such as it is, and who will send a knife into your bosom while a crucifix and a reliquary repose upon their own. Further to strengthen the anomaly of his position as a priest, he was accustomed to declare the whole catholic priesthood rogues without faith; and he affected himself a very libertine character, addicting himself in a particular manner to the perusal of indecent French songs, a whole collection of which was once found in his portfolio. Moreover, his passion for one woman generalised itself; and besides its accidental gratification, he had, at the period of his power, mistresses in all the towns of the province.

The other bands of banditti, compared with this priest-robber's, were angels of mercy. Yet in the course of perpetrating the most ruthless crimes, Don Ciro would sometimes indulge in whims to which he tried to give an air of generosity. General D'Ottavio, a Corsican in the service of Murat, had long been pursuing him with a thousand men. One day Ciro, whose audacity was frequently quite romantic, armed at all points, sur-

prised the general, unarmed and alone, walking in his own garden. He discovered himself—pronounced his dreaded name, and remarked, that the life of the general, who sought *his* life, was in his hands. “But,” said he, “I will pardon you this time, although I shall cease to be so indulgent if you continue to hunt me about with so much fury!” Thus saying he leaped over the garden wall and disappeared.

When King Ferdinand was restored to his states on the continental side of the Faro by the great political game of Europe, in which he had been about as neutral as a marker in whist, he recalled, as I have already mentioned, such as had been *fuorusciti* for political opinions. There were many robbers in this number, but *Ciro Anacchiarico*’s crimes were of too deep a die. Yet this bold villain did not fear to present himself to the public authorities at Lecce, claiming his majesty’s amnesty. The magistrates gave him a safe conduct to the city of Bari, where he was to reside, under the eye of the police, for the present. He pretended afterwards that he felt remorse and repentance at this time, and even entertained a serious idea of shutting himself up in the college of the missionaries, and passing the rest of his days in fasting and prayers. “I was on the point,” said he in his justification, “of following up my noble resolution, when the thunderbolt burst upon my head (*allorchè intesi lo scroscio del violentissimo fulmine, che si seagliava sul mio capo.*) I have not force enough to express to you, how my heart was rent, or the deplorable state which I miserably sank into, when I was secretly informed by a faithful friend, that my arrest was ordered on the cruel accusation of having infringed the royal mandate. I vanished like lightning from Bari; I went to the capital to obtain redress, and to discover once more the black conspiracy against me. All

was vain. The hopes I had cherished disappeared ; and while perplexed as to the steps I ought to take, the power of my relentless persecutors prevailed. At last I left the capital, and guided only by that fortitude and constancy so necessary in my misfortunes, I betook myself to my old haunts in the solitude of the forests, and recommenced a savage and wretched life."

This was at the end of 1815 : towards the termination of the following year, Don Ciro, having well employed the intervening time, and now taking the alarm at the adoption of vigorous measures by the government to put down the brigands, conceived the bold idea of uniting all the various bands of robbers and outlaws, of whatever faction or denomination, to oppose the march of the king's troops with all the forces they could muster, and otherwise to assert henceforward one common cause.

The Vardarelli, the most conspicuous of the robbers, were then enjoying the honours of their royal capitulation and were in the king's pay ; but Ciro knew there were grounds of fear and dissatisfaction existing among them, and hoped to induce them "to turn out" again. He therefore invited them, with the chiefs of other bands, to a personal conference, in order, in the first place, to treat of the measures to be pursued against General Church, who was coming into their provinces at the head of the king's troops : and these worthies had, accordingly, two different interviews, the first at the end of 1816, in a little deserted chapel, where Don Ciro celebrated mass before he began the conference, and the second in the month of March or April 1817, in a farm between S. Eramo and Gioja. Gaetano Vardarelli differed as to the propriety of a junction. He represented that it would be well to act in concert, but still separately, and that they ought by all means to avoid a general

insurrection, of which they might easily become the victims. "As long," said he, "as our bands are not numerous, government will be deceived, and make war upon us feebly, as it does now ; but as soon as we form ourselves into a more important body, it will be forced to send an army against us." It appeared, that the Vardarelli, though dissatisfied, were inclined to wait events ; and their advice, or non-adhesion, upset Don Ciro's grand plan.

But still bolder and more comprehensive was the next project of this extraordinary man. Seeing the country overrun by sects and secret societies, which, under the names of Carbonari, &c. aimed at political changes, differing in quality, but all equal in absurdity, and some of which exercised vengeance too horrible and rites too disgusting or ridiculous to mention,—he fancied that, by placing himself at the head of one of these, he could not only gratify his passion for plunder and revenge, but ultimately erect himself into the chief of a wonderful republic, whose influences were to be felt, not over Naples or Italy alone, but over the whole extent of Europe, whose monarchs, whether constitutional or absolute, were all to sink under the dagger of his votaries. Ciro Anacchiarico does not appear to have created either, but to have united two of these mysterious societies of cut-throats, who had assumed the names, the one of "I Patrioti Europei," (The European Patriots,) the other of "I Decisi," (The Decided or Resolute.) If the affiliation I have heard traced be correct, these sects both rose out of the Carbonari ; and the moderate and respectable men—and there were many and many thousands such—of that secret society, ought to have paused and shuddered when they saw how easily their conduct might be imitated and perverted, and to what horrors secret societies might be turned. These asso-

ciations of the "Patriots" and the "Decided" increased rapidly, from the weakness of the government in neglecting, at first, to punish the guilty, and from the notorious corruption of the inferior government officers and lower clergy. It was found that priests were attached to all their camps and ramifications. Besides our robber-priest, Don Ciro, whose superior talent and remorseless mode of proceeding soon put him at the head of the whole, the arch-priest Cirino Cicillo, of Cacamola, Vergine, of Coregliano, and Leggeri, filled important situations in the sect. The arch-priest Zurlo, of Valsano, particularly distinguished himself, and in his native town, and on Christmas eve, he renewed a scene of the middle ages,—he celebrated the midnight mass, armed from head to foot!

As soon as these bands (compared to whom the avowed brigands had hitherto been moderate and decorous associations) had acquired some strength, they sent detachments into nearly every town and village in Apulia. Supported by a larger troop in the neighbourhood, they soon became the despotic masters of solitary or insulated places. A horde of twenty or thirty of these ruffians, who pretended a more peculiar inspiration of republicanism and secret societyship, overran the country, disguised and masked as punchinellos, committing atrocities, in more ways than one, too unnatural and loathsome to bear repeating.

The most horrid crime perpetrated by the priest Don Ciro was under this disguise of the national buffoon. There was a beautiful woman in a remote village, of whom he had become passionately enamoured (after his fashion), but whom neither his presents, his promises, nor his threats, could seduce. It was carnival time, and on a certain evening she and her relations and friends were enjoying the pleasures of a dance and a

feast. Don Ciro and several of his more desperate adherents came to the house, disguised as Punchinellos. At that season of madness, every house, where an entertainment is going on, is open, and as all the neighbourhood are masking and mumming, it is of course not easy, nor is it attempted, to distinguish who the thronging guests may be. Don Ciro proved himself an acceptable one by bringing a plentiful supply of excellent wine, in which he and his comrades pledged the company, and drank *brindisis*, or rhymed toasts, of admirable facetiousness.

They then joined the dance, the disguised priest selecting the happy and unsuspecting object of his passion, for his partner. After numerous tarantellas, which, of all the dances I have seen, are the most calculated to irritate voluptuousness, the party sat down to an abundant supper, the punch-robber-priest still occupying the ear of the beautiful *paesana*, and only detaching his attention from her to make the party drink. As for himself, he merely touched the wine with his lips, and so remained perfectly sober, whilst all the rest of the men were fast approaching intoxication.

At what he considered an opportune moment, he quitted his punchinello squeak, resumed his natural voice, made himself known to the woman, and again pleaded his passion. The poor creature was as averse as ever. He then rose, beckoned to his companions, and wishing the festive party good night, left the house—which, in half an hour, was wrapped in flames. And so well laid were the robber's matches, and so drunk and stupified the revelling peasants, whose wine had been drugged, that they all perished in the conflagration. Don Ciro himself, when in prison, and in the power of General Church, from which he knew there was no escape, related this atrocious exploit, nor did the

near prospect of death induce him to make a single expression of remorse. He dwelt on the beauty of his victim, and his still existing mortification at his not having obtained her love, boasting that he had not often been so disappointed.

In places where open force could not be employed, the most daring disciples were sent in secrecy to watch the moment to execute the sentences of death pronounced in the mysterious society. In this manner, the sectary Perone plunged his knife into the bowels of an old man of seventy—the respectable Dell' Aglio, of Francavilla ; and afterwards massacred his wife and servant, having introduced himself into their house, under pretence of delivering a letter ; and in the same manner, the Justice of Peace of Luogo Rotondo and his wife were assassinated in their own garden.

These bloody sectaries would not suffer neutrality : it was absolutely necessary to join them, or to live exposed to their vengeance, which appeared to be inevitable. The society would pass a secret sentence of death, and proceed at once to its execution, or, if necessary, an individual would take the office upon himself, and wait days and nights, until he could strike the blow. The old man of the mountains seemed risen from the grave—the Apulian sectaries were as sanguinary and unerring as his tremendous satellites had been.

They did not invite the support of the rich proprietors and persons of distinction, against whom their hostilities were to be directed ; but they unhappily found partisans among the less wealthy ; and some few of the inferior gentry, who were jealous of the high nobility, also joined them. These men would probably have blushed at the idea of becoming brigands, yet could there be a more detestable species of brigandage, than what was revealed to them by Don Ciro and his associates ? Even allowing that

parts of his plan were not divulged to the more respectable of his sectaries, (who, in the long run, must have been the victims of the more villanous,) yet what sympathy can be inspired by the political aspirations of men who could ally themselves with known robbers and murderers, like Anicchiarico and his gang? The government, instead of summoning the opulent proprietors to its assistance, offended and disgusted them by distrust. A meeting at the fair of Galantina, to deliberate on the means of checking the disorders, was cried down, and treated at Naples as a revolutionary proceeding. In extenuation, however, of this seeming imprudence of government it must be mentioned, that many of these gentlemen or noblemen, resident on their estates in the provinces, were themselves members of secret societies, which had all a political scope; they were not *Patrioti Europei*, or *Decisi*, but they were *Carbonari*:—this I, being in the country, both before and after the events under discussion, know very well—the Neapolitan government also knew it, and they could hardly draw a line between the sects, the objects of all of which, as already mentioned, were revolutionary, and they feared all the secret societies alike. In the winter of 1816–17, I saw, partly accidentally, and partly through circumstances which I did not seek, but which it would be dishonourable to disclose, a re-union of these gentlemen. Some were provincial nobility, some noblemen from Naples, who only occasionally resided on their estates, some were substantial farmers. The hour of rendezvous was midnight—the house selected a solitary one, and the members of the club came singly, or in parties of two or three each, on horseback, and without any attendants. This appearance of mystery and night-plotting, though sufficiently romantic, did not captivate me much, and young as I was, I could not help feeling

that the outward and visible showing of these regenerators or reformers was against them. As one of the uninitiated, I was not admitted to their deliberations; but I was informed that they all tended to the establishment of a constitutional government in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies.

When the Decisi became so formidable, these gentlemen, however, showed the purity of their intentions, by aiding the government to their utmost, as soon as more energy was shown, and by co-operating with General Church, with whom many individuals of this class served both as officers and private volunteers.

But at the same time, General Pastore, commandant of these provinces, and the Marquis Predicattella, Intendant of Lecce, inflamed party spirit by imitating the system of Canosa,* and setting up private societies to work against private societies: the national guard, under their orders, suffered itself to be partly seduced by the Pa-

* The life of this mad partisan and plotter, the prince of Canosa, would be as amusing as that of any conspirator or brigand chief. He was the most fanatic of royalists, and fancied he could put down the Carbonari, or ultra-liberals, by means of the society of the Caldarari, or ultra-Bourbonists. Blood and plunder were nothing in his eyes, provided they worked for the king and the holy faith. Yet he was a conscientious man, thoroughly convinced of the sacredness of his calling—a poet with considerable satirical power; gentlemanly, and tolerably amiable in private society, and, like the ex-dey of Algiers, very fond of clocks and watches. Among my reminiscences I can count an evening passed in the same *conversazione* with him, and several meetings with the famous Cardinal Ruffo, who was a very different character, with nothing of the fanatic or madman about him. Indeed, I could almost say of him what Lord Byron did of Ali Pasha, of Joannina, that he was one of the most amiable, gentlemanly old gentlemen I ever met. Cardinal Ruffo was, however, no more an Ali Pasha than a Canosa. This venerable prince of the Roman church was very gallant, and much pleased with the society of ladies, whom, moreover, he seemed to possess the art of pleasing.

trioti and Decisi sectaries, and a number of soldiers and some officers of the Crown battalion of reserve were similarly corrupted.

The number of these daring sectaries had arrived at its greatest height in the month of December 1817, or of January 1818. At this period they were estimated at 20,000 men! The mass of them lived at home, in apparent tranquillity, on the produce of their professions; but they were not the less active in committing unheard-of crimes, as their detection was the more difficult. Persons have been known, when in the power, and under the daggers of these ruffians, to sign contracts for the sale of their houses or lands, the objects of the cupidity of these desperadoes; the contracts were executed in all the forms of the law, and acknowledgments were given by the unfortunate owners for sums which they had never received.

The sittings of these societies were, at first, in the night, like the more respectable re-union I have mentioned, and were carefully guarded by sentinels; their military exercises took place in solitary houses, or suppressed and deserted convents; but taking courage by degrees, they were afterwards seen performing their evolutions by day, and in the open air. Most of them had fire-arms: all had poniards. They also began to organise a corps of cavalry.

The patent of this society sufficiently explained its objects. It was an oblong, square paper, or parchment. Two of the angles were ornamented with a skull, over one of which was inscribed "Sadness," and the word "Death" over the other. The opposite angles had cross-bones, with the inscriptions "Terror" and "Mourning." On the top of the patent were the fasces and the cap of liberty, planted upon a death's head, and supported by two axes. At the bottom was a thunderbolt

darting from a cloud, and shivering the royal crowns and the papal tiara. Stripes of yellow, red, and blue, the tri-colour of the society, surrounded the patent. The words of the patent were these :

“ The Salentine Decision.

Health.

N^o. — Grand Masons.

“ The Decision of Jupiter the Thunderer hopes to make war against the tyrants of the Universe, &c.” *(These words of which only the initials were given, were written in blood, as were several other parts of the document.)*

“ The mortal — is a Brother Decided. N^o. —, belonging to the Decision of Jupiter the Thunderer, spread over the face of the earth, by his decision, has had the pleasure of belonging to this Salentine Republican Decision. We invite, therefore, all philanthropic societies to lend their strong arm to the same, and to assist him in his wants, he having come to the Decision, that he will obtain Liberty or Death. Dated this day, the — of —, &c.”

Here followed three signatures written in blood.

1st. Of the Grand Master, with four points after it, which indicated his power of passing sentence of death.*

* They slaughtered with method and solemnity, or at least, they were enjoined so to do by their institutions. As soon as the sectaries employed on this service found it convenient to effect their purpose, at the signal of the first blast of a trumpet they unsheathed their daggers; they aimed them at their victim at the second blast; at the third they gradually approached their weapons to his breast; and at the fourth, “with real enthusiasm,” to use their cannibal language, they plunged them into his body! These four blasts were symbolised by the four dots after the Grand Master’s name. When the Decisi wrote to any one, not of the order, to extort contribu-

2d. Of the Second Decided.

3d. Of the Register of the Dead, whose functions did not relate to the deceased members of the society, but to the victims they immolated, and of whom they kept a register apart, on the margin of which were found blasphemies and most infernal projects.

The excesses of such a society, directed by such a man or monster, as *Ciro Anicchiarico*, may be easily conceived. But they were now drawing to their close. General Church, armed with the royal *Alter-Ego*, or with full and unlimited power, was sent into these distracted provinces, where his energetic and prudent conduct cannot be too much praised. He crossed the river *Ofanto* in the Apulian plain with 1200 men, chiefly of the foreign regiments in the Neapolitan service, formed by himself; among them were some companies of cavalry. He could depend upon this force, which was for the greater part composed of Germans, Swiss, *Moreotes*, and Albanians. The soldiery already in the country were only to be depended upon, after they had witnessed the firm determination with which the general set about his duty, and after the factious individuals, contaminated by the sectaries, had been weeded out. The same was the case with the militia.

Encouraged by the example set them by the dukes of *San Cesareo* and *Monte Jasi*, and others of the nobility and wealthy proprietors, several individuals even of the lowest class, furnished information concerning *Don Ciro* and his sectaries, and joined heart and hand in the measures for their extermination. The

tions, or to command him to do any thing—if these four points were on the paper, it was known that the person they addressed was condemned to death, in case of disobedience. If the points were not inserted, he was threatened with milder punishment, such as laying waste his fields, or burning his house.

fear of not being supported had hitherto prevented these honest men from acting ; but still the greater part of the inferior order were shy and silent, maintaining a line of conduct which indicated that they would not hesitate to declare for the sectaries, if the latter should succeed against General Church. This was particularly observed in the neighbourhood of Taranto, at Grottaglie, San Marzano, Martina, and Francavilla, the usual haunts of Don Ciro Anicchiarico and his friends. When General Church first visited these places, the inhabitants looked on in gloomy silence, and no person saluted him ; a poor old monk was the only person who bowed to him.

The bandits and the banished were summoned for the last time before the royal commission at Lecce.† Don

† The execrable excesses of the secret societies had spread in the neighbourhood of Lecce, which is a large and fine city. A number of respectable young men were invaded by the spirit of mysticism, and suddenly became fanatic and bloody-minded. The madness that prevailed was almost unaccountable. At Gallipoli, the great oil-mart, which is about twenty-five miles from the city of Lecce, several young men, with nearly all of whom I had been acquainted, surprised a townsman in the olive groves near to the beautiful village of the Piscioti, where the Gallipolitans have their country houses, and murdered him in cold blood, after the fashion of *I Patrioti Europei* and *I Decisi*. Each of them buried a stiletto in the body of the selected victim, whom they left dead and horribly mangled. They repaired by night and burned the body with dry branches and twigs of the olive trees, but they were discovered at their infernal work, and shortly after arrested and brought to trial. They were all very young men—some of them mere striplings. One was the son of an old broker and English interpreter, to whom I had had sundry opportunities of being serviceable, and who in return had frequently sent this very youth to be my guide and companion through the country. I had always found him honest and kind-hearted, very intelligent, and quiet, even to meekness in his manners. A brother of his, who was also a great deal with me, and also, to all appearance, a most amiable young man, did indeed rather alarm me one day when a ruffian of Gallipoli, a galantuomo, and one in power, thought proper to insult me, for he deliberately offered

Ciro sent in his justification, (a most remarkable composition, with considerable eloquence and ingenuity, and more impudence than can enter our conceptions;) but knowing his pardon to be hopeless, instead of presenting himself in person, he prepared to defend himself by his sectaries and arms.

General Church then made his military dispositions. He divided his troops into moveable columns, and placed garrisons upon some points where they were absolutely required, either from their commanding the vast plains of the country, or because they were strong enough to serve as places of retreat for the brigands. The moveable columns all operated towards a common centre, by gradually contracting the circle which embraced the towns of Grottaglie, San Marzano, and Francavilla. Other columns of reserve accompanied the general, who proceeded, with the rapidity of lightning, wherever the spies had traces of *Ciro Anicchiarico*.

At first, confident in his resources, material and moral, the brigand-priest set a price on the head of the bold Englishman, but the general's proceedings soon un-

to take upon himself the office of a *Callum Beg*, and to quiet the bully by a thrust in the dark. But this was an ebullition of gratitude for me!

When his son was in prison, the poor old father, who was then past his eightieth year, wrote to me at Naples to beg, if I had any acquaintance or interest with persons about the Court, to make an application in favour of the youthful murderer. I had not, and should hardly have used it if I had. They were all condemned to the galleys for life, and my former friend was sent to the port of Brindisi, where one of his brothers held a very respectable situation in the customs.

The fire that lies hid in the hearts of these people, under an exterior of indolence and apathy, is astonishing and fearful. As they now are, they may be inflamed for every evil. Were they benefited by education and good government for a few generations, they might become a nation of heroes.

deceived him, and he was heard to murmur, while biting his thumb in token of rage and disappointment, "This is a different sort of man from those they have hitherto sent against me! I have fooled many a general—French, Italian, and Neapolitan, but this one will end by making a fool of me!"

He began to perceive that his resources became day by day weaker and weaker; his credit with the people of the country was no longer what it had been; his *prestige* was eclipsed to their eyes, and he had to dread that those who were still faithful to him, would soon fall from his side. If he could, he would then have escaped from the country which had so long trembled at his name. He privately reached the port of Brindisi, where he attempted to embark; but the captain of the vessel recognised him, and demanded 2000 ducats as the price of his safety; not having them about him to give, he wrote to his friends, who refused to advance the sum.

Pressed and surrounded more and more closely, pent in the arena, tied to the stake, Don Ciro resolved to risk a general rising of such of his allies as continued desperate, and a pitched battle with the royal troops. He fixed the 27th of February 1818 for this purpose, and appointed the place of rendezvous under the walls of San Marzano, but his final catastrophe preceded that date.

Ciro Anicchiarico set out from Grottaglie on the 25th of January 1818, with forty horsemen and ten foot. At two o'clock in the afternoon he fell in with a detachment of General Church's cavalry, commanded by Captain Montorj, who charged him, and drove him as far as Neviera, a farm at the foot of the hill of San Marzano. Ciro there made a short stand, and then retreated up to the town itself in tolerably good order.

Captain Montorj followed and attempted to enter by the steep and narrow path which wound up to the town;

but *Ciro* and his adherents of *San Marzano* repulsed him. The officer then turned the hill in order to scale it on the side of *Manduria*, but there too he was received by a shower of balls. He observed, however, that these were the same men who had repulsed him in the former attempt and had followed his movements, and hence concluded they were not sufficiently numerous to defend all the points at once, and that he should gain his object by deceiving them. Concealing himself behind one of the garden walls, he drew the robbers' attention by firing a carbine or two in that direction, and then he suddenly appeared in the opposite direction followed by most of his men. The stratagem succeeded: *Montorj* entered *San Marzano*, and the panic-struck followers of *Ciro* dispersed. The great object was to secure *Ciro*; but he was not to be found: he had made another (perhaps the hundredth) of his wonderful escapes, and was safe in the open country before the infantry of a moveable column arrived, which it did immediately after his flight from the town.

An instant census was taken of *San Marzano*, the mayor of which suggested to Major *Bianchi*, the commander of the column, a method of discovering the delinquents. Every house was searched, and the guilty were recognised by the smell or the blackness of their hands, a proof of their having recently handled fire-arms and powder. *Vito Serio*, the brothers *Francesco* and *Angelo Vito Lecce*, *Raffaello Zaccharia*, and *Pietro Barbuzzi* were arrested, and all executed on the 3d of February at *Francavilla*. Their heads were placed in front of the church of *San Marzano*. This church was blown down by a hurricane some months after, and the heads were buried beneath its ruins. Major *Bianchi* also took the black standard, and the insignia and decorations of *Don *Ciro**, which General *Church* forwarded to *Naples*,

where they were presented to the king by Prince Nugent, the captain-general.

Major Bianchi, following up his advantages, proceeded the next day to Francavilla. Here he found the inhabitants in the greatest fermentation, determined to break open the prisons and release those confined in them. Having ascertained who were the ringleaders, he lost not a moment in causing them to be seized in their houses. His gens-d'armes patrolled the streets with orders to lay hands on every individual they might meet bearing arms. He thus terrified the towns-people and quelled the tumult.

General Church then arrived in person: the troops concentrated on Francavilla, where a military commission was established to try the outlaws. Don Ciro had now been missing for six or seven days; not a word had been heard of him since his escape from San Marzano, but the general fancying he could not be far off, and that he was still in intimate correspondence with some individuals in that town, threatened it with plunder and destruction, unless its inhabitants enabled him to secure the person of the robber-priest within eight days. Trembling for their houses and property, the militia of San Marzano then undertook to pursue Don Ciro, and on the 6th of February they beset him in the *masseria* (or farm house) of Scaserba, not above ten miles from General Church's quarters at Francavilla.

The masserie in Apulia and the provinces of Bari, Otranto, and Taranto, are all built on the same plan, and are very capable of defence. The word is not rendered by "farm-house," which gives but an inadequate idea of the masseria. They date from the period when the incursions of the Turks and pirates were apprehended, and when the country people shut themselves up in their strongholds with their cattle and most valuable effects, in

order to secure themselves from attack. A square wall of enclosure, sufficiently high and solid, generally surrounds the dwelling-house, built against one side, and containing three or four large habitable rooms, and sometimes a small chapel. The vast stables, granaries, and out-houses, within the walls, form a right angle with this dwelling-house, but without touching it. In the midst of the enclosure, at some distance from the surrounding walls, rises a round or square tower of two stories, standing quite alone. The ascent to the upper story is either by stone steps, inserted in the tower, by a drawbridge, or by a ladder easily drawn up into the tower. This description will enable the reader to understand how Don Ciro could make so long a resistance in the *masseria* of Scaserba.

He had arrived at this lonely place with some of his comrades worn out with fatigue, and had thought he could venture to repose himself there for a few hours. It was said that he had previously provided Scaserba and many other lonely *masserie* of the district with arms, ammunition, and some provisions. He was surprised at the sudden and hostile apparition of the militia of San Marzano, but not at all alarmed, making sure he could cut his way through them whenever he chose. Had he rushed out at once, he might have done so. He coolly stayed where he was, and let them form before the gate of the *masserie*. So strong was his spell on the minds of these men, that for a long time they hesitated to approach within range of his never erring musket—the first that did so, he shot dead from the outer walls. This delay, however, cost him dear. The militia of San Marzano, though not brave, were this time in earnest, and having sent information to Lieutenant Fonsmorte, stationed at the “Castelli,” a position between Grottaglie and Francavilla, that officer hastened to the spot with forty men

of regular troops. As this force came in sight on the edge of the plain, Don Ciro bit his thumb until it bled, for he understood that a vigorous attack was to be made, and retreat was now hopeless. He soon, however, recovered his presence of mind, and locking up the poor people of the masserie in the straw-magazine, and putting the key in his pocket, he retired with his desperate followers to the tower. Having ascended to the upper story, they drew in the ladder after them, and proceeded to load all their guns, of which they had a good number.

It was now evening; the darkness of night soon succeeded the brief twilight of the south. That night must have been a sleepless one for Don Ciro, though no attempt was made at storming his stronghold. The morning dawn, however, afforded him no comfort, for Captain Corsi had arrived from Francavilla with a detachment of gens-d'armes, and soon after Major Bianchi came to the field with other reinforcements!

The siege of Scaserba was now formed by one hundred and thirty-two soldiers; the militia, on whom little dependence was placed, being stationed in the second line, and at some distance.

Don Ciro vigorously defended the outer walls and the approaches to his tower from sunrise to sunset. In the night he attempted to escape, but the neighing of horses made him suspect that some cavalry had arrived, whose pursuit it would be impossible to elude, and he saw pickets all around the masseria. He therefore retired, after having killed, with a pistol-shot, a voltigeur stationed under the wall he had attempted to scale. He again shut himself up in his tower, and employed himself all night in making cartridges. An afternoon, two nights, and a whole day had been spent, and Don Ciro was still master of the whole enclosure, and the outer walls of the masseria! At daybreak, the besiegers tried to

burst open the strong wooden gate of the outer wall: *Ciro* and his men creeping from the tower and under the wall by the gate, repulsed the assailants, killing five and wounding fourteen of the soldiers. A barrel of oil was then rolled to the gate, in order to burn it. The first man who set fire to it was shot through the heart. But its flames communicated to the door, which was soon accessible, and *Don *Ciro** was obliged to retreat to his tower. How long he might have kept *Major Bianchi* at bay, had not a piece of artillery arrived, and had he not forgotten an important part of provision for a siege, is uncertain; but as the day advanced a four-pounder was brought to the spot, and pointed against the roof of the tower. This little piece produced great effect. The tiles and bricks which fell, drove *Don *Ciro** from the upper to the lower story of the tower. The assailants, satisfied with the effects produced by the four-pounder, would not approach the tower; he had nothing to do in the way of firing at them, to keep up his spirits;—at the same time, and in this horrid state of inactivity or passiveness, he was tormented with a burning thirst, for he had forgotten to provide himself with water—and he never could drink wine.

At length, after some deliberations with his companions, he demanded to speak with *General Church*, who he believed was in the neighbourhood; then to the *Duke of Monte Jasi*—(he seemed to have had the ancient knights' anxiety to surrender to none save people of distinction;)—but that nobleman being also absent, he condescended to capitulate with *Major Bianchi*. On their approach, he addressed the besiegers, and threw them some bread. *Major Bianchi* assured him that he should not be maltreated by the soldiery, of whom he had killed and wounded so many. He then lowered the ladder, descended from the tower, and presented himself to the

major and his troops, with the words "Eccomi, Don Ciro,"—Here am I, Don Ciro!

His comrades then followed him. And how many were these desperate men, who had so long defended themselves against such a force? They were only three—Vito di Cesare, Giovanni Palmieri, and Michele Cuppoli.

Their hands, their faces, their dress, were horribly begrimed by powder and smoke, but there was no appearance of wounds on their persons, and their countenances, particularly that of their daring leader, were firm and resolute in the extreme. The first thing Don Ciro did after surrendering himself to the soldiers was, to beg them to give him water to quench his consuming thirst. He then delivered the key and desired them to liberate the people of the masseria, who had been locked up all this while in the straw-magazine. He declared that they were innocent, and as they came out of their place of confinement he distributed money among them. He patiently suffered himself to be searched and bound. Some poison was found upon him, which he said he would have taken in the tower had not his companions prevented him.

The besiegers and their captives now marched off for Francavilla. Don Ciro conversed quietly enough all the way with Major Bianchi, to whom he related the principal circumstances of his most extraordinary life.

In prison he was equally calm. He only appeared to be interested for the fate of some of his partisans, or *Decisi*: he declared that they had been compelled by his threats and their own fears to do whatever they had done, and he entreated that they might not be persecuted.

On being placed before the council of war, presided by Lieutenant-Colonel Guarini, he addressed a speech to that officer, mistaking him for General Church. Among other strong arguments he used, was this—

"On the day that you, general, with the Duke of San Cesareo and only a few horsemen, reconnoitred Grottaglie, I was there, with several of mine, concealed behind a ruined wall, close by the gate where you entered. I covered you with my rifle, and I never missed my aim at ten times that distance! Had not the feelings of mercy prevailed in my bosom, general, instead of being here to judge me, you would have been in your grave. Think of this, signor general, and let me meet with the mercy I have shown!"

On being informed of his mistake, he insisted on seeing General Church; when this was refused him, he quietly resigned himself to his fate, drily saying, "Ho capito," (I understand.) He did not pronounce another word.

After sentence of death was passed, a missionary introduced himself, and offered him the consolations of religion. Don Ciro answered him with a smile, "Let us leave alone all this stuff and prating! we are of the same trade—don't let us laugh at one another!"

On being asked by Captain Montorj, reporter of the military commission which condemned him, how many persons he had killed with his own hand, he carelessly answered, "Who can tell?—they may be between sixty and seventy."

As he was led to execution, he recognised Lieutenant Fonsmorte, the officer who had been the first to arrive at the masseria of Scaserba with his regular troops. Don Ciro had admired his readiness and courage, and said to him, "If I were king, I would make you a captain."

The streets of Francavilla, through which he passed, were filled with people; even the house-tops were crowded with spectators. They all preserved a gloomy silence.

On his arrival at the place of execution, Don Ciro walked with a firm step to his fatal post. He wished to

be shot standing—but they ordered him to kneel. He did so, presenting his breast to the soldiers. He was then told that malefactors, like himself, were always shot with their backs to the soldiers: “It is all the same,” he replied, with a smile, and then he turned his back. As he did so, he advised a priest, who persisted in remaining near to him, to withdraw, “for,” said he, “these fellows are not all such good shots as I have been—they may hit you!”

He spoke no more—the signal was given—the soldiers fired at the kneeling priest-robber. Twenty-one balls took effect—four in the head! Yet he still breathed and muttered in his throat; it required a twenty-second shot to put an end to him! This fact was confirmed by all the officers and soldiers present at his execution. The people, who had always attributed supernatural powers to him, were confirmed in their belief by this tenaciousness of life, which was, indeed, little short of miraculous. “As soon as we perceived,” said one of the soldiers very seriously, “that Don Ciro was enchanted, we loaded his own musket with a silver ball, and this destroyed the spell.”

Thus fell in 1818, after fifteen years of a most lawless life, dating from his jealousy and first murder, Don Ciro Anicchiarico, of whom little else remains to be said, save that his countenance had nothing at all repulsive about it, but was, on the contrary, rather mild and agreeable; that he was master of a verbose but most persuasive eloquence, though pedantic in his style and over addicted to classical allusions and inflated phrases—the general defects of his countrymen, the Neapolitans.

The reader who has seen the destruction of their head, may feel some curiosity as to what befel the body of the sanguinary sect, the “Decisi.”

The day after the death of Don Ciro, ten of the most criminal among them were led through the streets of Francavilla to execution: two or three of them recognised at the windows the fathers, the sons, the widows, or relatives of those they had assassinated by the decision of their horrid secret tribunal, and asked pardon of them. But these were the only men among them who ever expressed the least feeling of repentance. All the others were so hardened and fanatical, that they gloried in, rather than regretted their crimes, and died with a ferocious indifference. Among their number were the grand master, the second decided, and the registrar of the dead—the three dignitaries of the order.

The military tribunal afterwards brought about two hundred and twenty-seven persons to trial. Nearly half of these, having been guilty of murder and robbery by force of arms, were condemned to capital punishment, and their heads were exposed near the places of their residence, or in the scenes of their crimes.

The death of Don Ciro and his principal accomplices happily put a stop to disturbances, and to that atrocious system which had threatened to take a wider range. In a short time peace was restored to the desolated provinces. General Church used his absolute power with admirable discretion. Even his enemies soon admired, and then loved him. His established principle was, to listen to, or receive no accusations against political opinions, or connections with secret societies; but he punished crimes and deeds of violence with severity. He caused the accused to be tried without delay; hunted out vagrants; and dismissed from their situations all such government officers as could not be depended upon. Instead of seizing the people's arms without an equivalent, he caused their full value to be paid. He threatened with death such artisans as should dare to manufacture pro-

hibited arms. He exhorted the confessors to endeavour to obtain possession of the poniards, or to oblige the penitents to throw them into deep wells. The city of Lecce, grateful for the blessings of restored tranquillity, voted a statue to the king, and a sword of honour to General Church, with the freedom of the city. And finally, in April, 1819, the following consoling circular was issued by the Neapolitan government.

“The reign of the assassins being at an end, and all the provinces tranquillised, it is resolved, in order to extinguish their memory, that the heads of the malefactors executed in pursuance of the sentences of the military commission, and which are exposed under the church towers, and other parts of the towns, shall be taken down and interred, and that the places where they were exposed shall be entirely cleaned and white washed. This letter shall be read by the arch-priests in all the churches.”

This narrative is chiefly taken from a very curious, but, I believe, little known volume on the Carbonari, written by the late Baron Bertholdi, though published anonymously in London.

The portion of his volume which contains the adventures of *Ciro Anicchiarico*, marvellous as it at times may appear, is perfectly correct, for I was in the country at the time, knew several of the actors in those sanguinary scenes, and heard the stories from their lips. Well might Byron say, “Truth is stranger than fiction!” Where is the writer of romance that would feign such a life as that of this priest-robber?

ROMAN BANDITTI.

It has been my object throughout this work to collect my materials, as far as possible, from eye-witnesses of the deeds of the brigands, or persons who were near their haunts and the scenes of their exploits, and derived their information at the immediate source. To no one can I be more indebted than to our own gentle countrywoman, Maria Graham, from whom the following account is taken; nor can I preface the scenes and adventures to which she has given such animation and reality, better than by the words of her own introduction.

“ These notices of the banditti might have been more full and more romantic, but the writer scrupulously rejected all accounts of them upon the truth of which she could not rely, thinking it better to give one authentic fact, than twenty doubtful, though more interesting, tales. The banditti, or fuorusciti of Italy, are what the forest outlaws of England were in the days of Robin Hood. They are not of the poorest or vilest of the inhabitants. They generally possess a little field and a house, whither they retire at certain seasons, and only take the field when the hopes of plunder allure them, or the fear of a stronger arm drives them to the woods and rocks. They live under various chiefs, who, while their reign lasts, are absolute; but as they are freely chosen,

they are as freely deposed, or sometimes murdered, if they offend their subjects. To be admitted into the ranks of the regular banditti, a severe apprenticeship to all kinds of hardships is required. The address and energy displayed by these men, under a better government, might conduce to the happiest effects. But here the fire burns not to warm, but to destroy."

The great heat of Rome during the summer of 1819 drove the fair author, her husband, and Mr. Eastlake the distinguished painter, whose admirable pictures of the Italian banditti are so generally known and admired, to seek a cooler retreat in some of the mountains in the neighbourhood of the ancient capital of the world.

"Accident," says the fair author, "determined in favour of the little town of Poli, between Tivoli and Palestrina; and as circumstances occurred while we were there of some interest, a sort of journal was kept of every thing material. During the last few days of our stay at Poli, the interest we had taken in the country people about us, was superseded by one to which a considerable degree of danger was joined. The banditti who had long infested the road between Rome and Naples, having been driven from their towns of Sonino, Frusinone, and Ferentino, partly by the Pope's edict, and partly by the march of a body of two thousand of his holiness's troops against them, had fled up the country and taken refuge in the wilds which border that great valley of the Apennines, formed by the course of the Anio, and separating the Marsian hills from those on whose edge Tivoli and Palestrina are situated. The highest point of this last ridge is the rock of Guadagnola, two hours walk from Poli. There one company of the banditti stationed itself, and thence made excursions to our very gates.

"The number of the inhabitants of Poli does not ex-

ceed one thousand three hundred; they are a very quiet simple people. The town stands on a narrow ridge of dark rock, between two mountain rivulets. The stone it is built of is so like the rock, that it looks as if it had grown out of it; and embosomed in thick woods, and overtopped by mountains, it shows like a mountain eagle's nest as one approaches it. It was a place of great consequence when the Conti, dukes of Poli, had under their dominion upwards of forty townships, and boasted of the cardinals, the princes, and the popes of their house! Their importance in the civil wars of Italy has given them a place in each of the three divisions of the *Divina Commedia* of Dante: but the title of the dukes of Poli is extinct, and their large possessions have devolved to other noble families."

The scenery around Poli, which is very accurately and strikingly described by our fair countrywoman, is of the most picturesque or romantic character, and no reader can well follow her, in her delightful excursions, through the wild wood, or the lonely valley, or to the mountain's top, where, as the sun is setting over the wide campagna, she pauses to read from Schiller the "Robber Moor's soliloquy," without wishing to be with her, though real and dreadful banditti were always close at hand.

"We had heard," writes she, a few days after her arrival, "from some peasants bringing their corn to be ground at the mills near Poli, that the robberies lately committed on the road between Rome and Naples, had determined government to raze to the ground the town of Sonino, which had opened its gates to the banditti, and had, in fact, long been their head-quarters. Indeed, the first report was, that the town had actually been battered down, and all the inhabitants put to death in the night. The peasants who gave this evidently exaggerated account, were of opinion that the men must certainly have been

absent from the town, or they would never have suffered it to be so surprised; and, in that case, they foretold the most dreadful consequences to whomsoever should fall into their hands, by way of reprisal for the murder of their wives and children. At any rate, whether Sonino were destroyed or not, whither the brigands, who would certainly leave the towns as soon as they heard the severe proclamation issued against them, would direct their steps, was matter of serious and anxious conjecture. Two years ago, on a similar occasion, the noted Di Cesaris, who was shot in the spring of 1818 near Terracina, led his followers up to these hills, and for nearly two months they subsisted on the spoil of the neighbouring townships. On such expeditions the banditti are always aided by the shepherds and goatherds, a race of men apt for their purposes, as their half-savage life, while it gives them enough intercourse with the towns to procure food and intelligence, detaches them so much from all social bonds as to render them indifferent to the crimes of others. The observation that the pastoral manners, which have been “ adorned with the fairest attributes of peace and innocence, are much better adapted to the fierce and cruel habits of a military life,”* is confirmed by the manners of the shepherds of these mountains. Where the townships have land enough to employ the inhabitants in agriculture and gardening, as at Polì, the inhabitants are kind and gentle; and when a robbery or outrage is committed, the first exclamation always is, he who has done the evil must be an idle fellow, who had not patience to wait while his bread was growing. But Capranica and some other mountain towns which have no arable land annexed to them, while they supply their neighbours with shepherds, also furnish their annual quota to the ranks of the banditti.”

* Gibbon, Dec. and Fall, chap. xxvi.

A band of gipsies, pedlars, rogues, and fortunetellers, as with us, suddenly made their appearance one afternoon at Poli. They seemed to be the forerunners of the brigands, who had been talked of during several days, for the next morning at dawn the gipsies disappeared, and it was ascertained to a certainty that a troop of banditti were at Guadagnola, a mountain peak, about two hours walk above Poli.

“Early the day before, which was the 12th of August 1819, these robbers had seized two lads, assistants to a surveyor. They were employed measuring in the wood leading to Guadagnola, when two men, armed, came suddenly up to them near the little chapel to the Madonna, and seized the youngest boy, who was going along the road; the other was a few paces within the wood. The robbers called to him by the opprobrious name ‘razza di cane,’ and presenting their muskets, forced him to come to them; when giving him a blow, they forced him and his companion before them to an open space in the wood, where they found eleven of their companions sitting on the grass, engaged in different occupations; the two who had taken the lads being sentinels, posted to give notice of any approaching danger. Their chief object in seizing the boys appeared to be that of obtaining information as to the principal inhabitants of Poli, and their places of daily resort, in order to capture some of them if possible, and thereby obtain a good sum as ransom. But they had another reason for taking them, and detaining them the whole day; and this was to prevent their giving such information concerning them and their situation in the neighbouring towns, as might enable the townspeople, or the military, to surround them. They, therefore, kept them prisoners till night; treated them very well, and gave them bread and cheese, with some water, which was all they had for themselves,

though the lads understood that they expected a provision of meat and some wine at night.

“ During the time of their captivity, the lads had full leisure to observe the dresses and the employments of the banditti : the latter were chiefly gaming. As soon as two sentinels were placed, which were frequently changed, the party divided into different sets, one of which played at cards ; another at morra, for a louis-d’or per chance ; a third party danced, while a fourth listened to a story, or ballad, in all the careless profligacy of an outlaw’s life. Their dress was picturesque, yet military.

“ Every robber had a silver heart, containing a picture of the Madonna and child, suspended by a red ribbon to his neck, and fastened with another of the same colour to his left side.

“ The boys described the robbers as being stout, active, young men, excepting one, who was very short and corpulent, with a bald head ; he appeared to be the butt of the rest, and, like Falstaff, to be not only witty himself, but the cause of wit in others : they called him the gourd-merchant, alluding to the gourdlike smoothness of his bald head. After asking about the different inhabitants of Poli by name, the brigands began to question their prisoners about the THREE English who were there ; whether they did not go out into the woods to paint, and other questions of the kind. The boys being really ignorant, could give them no information about us, and very little about any one else ; and therefore they were dismissed at night-fall, and made the best of their way home, where they were the first to give notice of the vicinity of the brigands, although several shepherds had seen them, and had even made purchases of bread and other provisions for them. The gonfaloniere then sent to Palestrina for the marshal of the district who alone can order out the civic guard.”

When their secrecy was no longer of use to the robbers, or dangerous to the inhabitants, the shepherds confessed that the banditti had visited their sheep-cots, near Capranica, on the evening of the 9th of August. "Only the day after we had been on the very same rock," says our author, "to see the sun set from it; and as we listened to the distant sound of a bagpipe among the hills, a young lad who was with us, said, 'That is most likely a shepherd from the Abruzzi, or some of those wild Neapolitan places that harbour the outlaws.' The brigands ate two of the shepherds' sheep, merely skinning them, and roasting them whole, and honoured them with their company for two nights. They sent one of them to Poli for bread, keeping his companions as hostages, and threatening all the shepherds with death, if they revealed having seen them within eight days. These threats, which are usual from the brigands, and the facility of executing them on the poor shepherds, always in the open country and solitary places, would sufficiently account for the silence or collusion of the latter.

"With their hosts the bandits talked very freely, treating of their own private histories and modes of life. They showed them the silver heart and picture of the Madonna, which each had suspended from his neck, saying, 'We know that we are likely to die a violent death; but in our hour of need we have these,' touching their muskets, 'to struggle for our lives with, and this,' kissing the image of the Virgin, 'to make our death easy.' This mixture of ferocity and superstition is one of the most terrific features in the character of the banditti of Italy.

"There was among this troop, which now so immediately interested us, shut up, as we were, at Poli," says Mrs. Graham, "one man from the neighbourhood, a shepherd, whose master had treated him rather cruelly,

and who now said that he thought it high time to call upon his master, and thank him for his courtesy. This observation being carried to the master, he was, of course, careful not to go out of the town gates alone, unarmed, or on foot. However, the brigands made him pay for his safety, or that of his flocks, which were exposed in the country; for they sent him an order to provide a number of velvet suits, linen shirts, and drawers, and stout great coats, and to deposit them at a certain spot, by a given time, on pain of losing his flocks on the hills. The proprietor sent a messenger to Rome to enquire of the government, whether his property would be protected or guarantied to him, if he refused to supply the robbers, or whether he should supply the robbers with the clothing required. The answer was such as to induce him to provide the articles demanded by the appointed day.

“The mareschal having arrived from Palestrina, in consequence of the message of the gonfaloniere of Poli, the civic guard was at last called out, and a singular scene presented itself, as we looked from our windows. The mareschal, with a single horse pistol stuck in his belt, was walking up and down, in consultation with the principal inhabitants of the place; for there was a pretty general expectation that the brigands would collect in greater numbers, and attempt to enter Poli that night. By-and-by, twelve or fourteen young men joined them, armed with muskets and fowling-pieces, of various construction; these formed the civic guard. Some of the guns were their own, others belonged to government, and were lent for the occasion. About ten o'clock, the party went to a little platform just without the principal gate, which usually serves as a play-ground for children, to fire at a mark, and try their powder, regardless of the spot being exactly within sight of the enemy's camp. At length they set out in pursuit of the brigands; but, as we

afterwards learned, with little hope or intention of doing more than driving them from their immediate haunt in the neighbourhood, and perhaps alarming them; for many had gone out without powder and shot, and few with more than a second charge. Shortly after their departure, a party of nearly two hundred men, who had been out to collect and drive in the cattle from the hill, entered the town, with such shouts of joy and triumph that we thought that some detachment of the brigands had been met with and routed; but we soon discovered the very unusual sight of a herd of fat oxen, with cows and fine calves, or rather heifers, running down the street, followed by their drivers, and accompanied by all the women and children of the town. Towards night a lieutenant, with a very small party of his Holiness' soldiers, entered the town, in consequence of a message sent to Tivoli the night before; they were intended to assist the town guard, and created an unusual degree of bustle. The lodging and victualling them did not seem to be a matter very easily adjusted, nor indeed very agreeable. Their gay dresses and trained step formed no small contrast with the rustic air and coarse clothing of our old friends; and the superiority they assumed, seemed by no means pleasing to the Polesi. At length the lanterns, which had been moving up and down the street at least two hours later than they had ever done before, dropped off one by one, the expected attack on the town was forgotten, and the night passed quietly as usual.

“ Early the next morning, another party of the townsmen, accompanied by most of the soldiers, set out in search of the brigands, and in the afternoon the party of the day before returned. They had found the lair of the robbers yet warm; the grass was trodden down; fragments of bread and other food, mingled with remnants

of clothing, torn and cut packs of cards, and broken ornaments, lay strewed about the ground. The skin of a sheep was hanging on a tree; and every thing bore the marks of a very hasty removal. The guard found a shepherd, with some dressed meat, and employed in making sandals of a kid's skin; this they taxed him with having killed for the brigands; but he asserted that he had taken it from the mouth of a wolf who had been at the flock the night before.

“The direction taken by the banditti, on the two following days, was by no means certain, and we began to hope that they had left the neighbourhood. But on the morning after, some women having reported that they heard a whistling in a deep glen, within a mile of the town, on the road towards Palestrina, the civic guard was ordered out in pursuit, and one of our party determined to accompany it. A soldier and a spy headed the little troop. As soon as they got out of the town, and reached the wood, the soldier directed them to march in Indian file. Though the result of this third expedition was as unsuccessful as that of the two others, the danger, or at least the apprehension of it, was sufficient to show the temper of the people. As they approached the suspected spot, strict silence was kept. A woman, who acted as guide, at length stopped, and the party began to descend into a deep defile, with the utmost caution, and great difficulty. It was a romantic spot, the bed of a river, at this season almost dry; and one of the men, as he looked fearfully round, whispered, ‘This is, indeed, a place for banditti.’ In the absence of the robbers themselves, the peasants climbing among the loose stones at the bottom, made a picturesque addition to the natural wildness of the scene. Here some of the people were observed to lag, to the great distress of the foremost, who exclaimed, ‘By heaven! those fellows are leaving us!’

The sides of the ravine, where not rocky, are clothed with large chestnut trees and brushwood, so that the danger of the situation, supposing the brigands to be concealed among the trees, induced the soldier to look for a convenient place to ascend. There was a steep, narrow, sloping field planted with maize, with chestnut trees on each side: the troop climbed up to it in silence, and the soldier directed the men to lower their muskets, that they might not be seen over the top of the brushwood. The spy, who was foremost, advanced towards the trees, half raised his musket, and then stepped back to the soldier, and whispered, which made the people believe they had found the robbers; and one of them said, 'Here they are,' and hesitated.

"The wood was entered, but nothing found there; and the rest of the march was only a repetition of the same cautious walk. The spy, who had left the company to examine a narrow path, was nearly shot by one of the men, who heard a rustling among the leaves. A smoke at a distance, which at first gave some alarm, turned out to be nothing but some chaff which a peasant was burning. At length they arrived at the top of the hill, between Poli and Capranica, a station where they resolved to wait for another division of the townsmen, which had gone round by a different road. At length they appeared, but neither party liked to approach the other, till a certain red jacket was recognised, when they joined, and returned the shortest way home. While the first party had waited under the trees for the other, sentinels had been posted all round, at a hundred yards' distance. The rest amused themselves by climbing for squirrels' nests, and telling stories of one another, from which it appeared that more than one of them had escaped from prison for attempts at assassination. One in particular, who seemed a kind of harlequin among them, had had more than one

hair-breadth 'scape when the sbirri were in pursuit of him. On one occasion he had escaped by leaping from a high window; and to prove that he had lost none of his agility, he diverted himself with climbing to the extremities of the high chestnut boughs, and dropping off them to the ground.

"Shortly after the return of the guard, we found that the banditti had really been in an opposite direction, on the heights of San Gregorio, whence they had taken a quantity of bread and wine. We therefore went out, and took a short walk without the gates. The near fields were more than usually peopled; for several small flocks and a few heads of cattle had been driven in from the hills, that they might go into the town at night for protection. We observed that the boy who went daily to cut wood for the baker had muffled the bell that hung round his ass's neck, in order to prevent the noise from betraying his master. The farmers who had occasion to go to the threshing-floors, all went well mounted, and with an attendant or two. On going home, we learned that a surgeon, and two or three other persons, had been seized by the brigands, and carried to the mountains, in order to obtain a ransom. They were inhabitants of Castel-Madama, a small town near Tivoli, and so named from Margaret of Austria, daughter of Charles V. This news necessarily increased the consternation of the householders of Poli, who now resolved to make every effort to assemble and arm the young men of the town. At night a small detachment of Polesi, which had been sent to join the people of Casapa in an attempt to drive the banditti from San Gregorio, where the tocsin had been sounded on the capture of the people from Castel-Madama, returned. They were sent back without attempting to do any thing, as it was feared that any open

measures against the robbers, before the ransom was paid, would endanger the lives of the prisoners."

On the 18th of August, the day of Saint Agapet, when there was a church festival and a fair at the neighbouring town of Palestrina, about two hundred and fifty persons ventured out from Poli to go to them. "One party preceded the other about half an hour, and both set off before daybreak. As the sun rose, the rear party were so alarmed that they began to think of returning home, seeing a number of persons through the trees, whom they at first took for robbers, but the sight of the women's white head-clothes satisfied them that they were townsfolk, and the two parties joined, and met with nothing farther to startle them on the road. Shortly after they left Poli, it was known that all the *poor* prisoners had been dismissed by the banditti; but those from whom they could hope to extort a ransom were detained. About noon a report reached us that one of the captives had been barbarously murdered; and towards night, as it had been ascertained at Tivoli that the surgeon, the only remaining prisoner, was safe, an order came to Poli for all the force it was possible to assemble to keep the pass of Guadagnola towards Poli, as every other avenue by which the brigands could escape was supposed to be already sufficiently guarded. This order arrived about sunset. Most of the men were absent at Palestrina, so that the boys and old people were collected in the street to choose out of. Their wives, mothers, and grandmothers, came out, each with her lantern, to beg that her husband or child might be left to guard her house, in case the robbers, taking advantage of the absence of the strong men, should attack the town. The families who possessed arms refused to lend them to the guard, and as it appeared that the night was likely to be wasted in altercations, the magistrates and the officer, who still remained in the town, resolved

to enter the houses forcibly, and take what arms they could find. Two or three houses were accordingly entered, but it consumed the time equally, and the guns were so well concealed, that there was little chance of obtaining enough to arm the few men they could provide; therefore they resolved to wait till the morning, when the men would be returned from Palestrina. The scene in the streets, where all public business is transacted, was not only quite new to us, but curious in itself. The armed and the unarmed, the willing and the unwilling, were all vociferating at once: the women were going about with their infants in one hand and a lantern in the other; now aggravating, now quieting the disputants. The people from the feast at Palestrina came gradually dropping in, laden with their nuts or other fairings, and mostly half intoxicated, all mingling together, and talking of danger from banditti to be apprehended that night, or to be provided against next day, without ever considering that, while they were disputing, the ruffians would escape in any direction they chose. Such was the evening of the eighteenth. The morning of the nineteenth was not much more orderly. The men, indeed, sober, and in earnest, for this time, had armed themselves well, and were leaving the town in greater numbers than we had yet seen assembled. Their wives and children, believing there was now some real danger, were sitting lamenting in groups about the street; but they might have spared themselves the pain. The great mountain pass had been left unguarded for more than twelve hours. Half that time would have sufficed the brigands, with their active habits, to have escaped to a distance far out of the reach of pursuit."

Tired with being pent up, and of seeing a town with twelve hundred inhabitants kept in continual alarm, our courageous countrywoman and her two companions, with

an escort, left Poli, on the 21st of August, for Tivoli. On her road she passed the Emperor Hadrian's villa, among whose ruins the robbers had passed the night, and then lay concealed. They must have seen her and her party pass, but as the number of their muskets were inferior, they did not risk an attack. She arrived safely at Tivoli, which she found in a state of still greater consternation than the little town she had left. Her escort joined immediately the people of Tivoli in pursuit of the outlaws, who were seen crossing the hills behind the town.

“ Every day while we remained at Tivoli brought some new particulars concerning the march of the banditti. It was ascertained that their entire number amounted to about one hundred and forty, divided into companies not exceeding twenty in each, for the sake of more easy subsistence. The head-quarters appeared to be at Rio Fredo, and in the woods of Subiaco. Their spies, and those who bought provisions for them, were lavishly paid, and the instances of any information being given against them were very rare. On one occasion, however, they had seized a ploughman belonging to Rio Fredo, and, after beating him, they had sent him to his house to fetch a few dollars, as the price of his future security while at work. On his way the ploughman met the robber hunters belonging to Subiaco, and gave them notice of the situation of the robbers. They desired him to fetch his money, and go to the appointed place with it, and if he found them still there, to leave a mark at a particular tree. Meantime they took measures for surrounding the robbers' lair, and having done so, waited patiently till the poor man had paid his money, and made the mark agreed on; and this they were more careful to do, as, had the brigands suspected he had given information, they would certainly have put him to death. As soon as they knew him to be safe, the hunters drew close

round the enemy, who were seven in number, and fired: two were killed on the spot, and the five others, of whom one was found dead of his wounds near the place next day, left their fire-arms, and concealed themselves in the thicket of Arcinuzzo, between Rio Freddo and Subiaco."

"Every evening the episcopal church bell rang at Tivoli, to set the guards at the different bridges leading to the town, as the people were in nightly expectation that the brigands would enter it in search of provisions, with which the shepherds had become rather shy of supplying them, since two or three of them had been taken up and imprisoned for so doing. On the night of the 21st or 22d seven robbers had gone to San Vetturino, armed chiefly with bludgeons, and had taken nearly all the bread in the town, but had not carried off any of the inhabitants, who, in fact, are not rich enough to afford much ransom. But the most intrepid gang lingered about Tivoli, where there are a number of rich proprietors, who might have furnished a considerable booty."*

"The body of a murdered man was found at the gate of San Gregorio, with twenty wounds, inflicted with knives. The brigands, emboldened by success, seemed determined to press closer round all the hill-towns. None

*"After we returned to Rome, we learned, that the same gang had seized the arch-priest of Vicovaro, whose nephew, having offered some resistance, was killed on the spot. The ransom demanded for the priest and a friend was so exorbitant that it could not be raised, on which the ruffians sent their ears to their families, and afterwards some of their fingers. At length, tired of waiting, and perhaps irritated by the complaints of the two prisoners, they murdered them! There is a sort of ferocious jollity among these brigands, more shocking, perhaps, than their actual cruelty. They had stripped the priest of his robes and clerical hat two or three days before they killed him; one of their number put on the sacerdotal clothing, and substituted for it his own, with his high-crowned hat, which they forced the poor priest to wear."

of the principal inhabitants ventured without the walls, and even the work-people were robbed of their ornaments and their little savings." Such being the dreadful state of this part of the country, the spirited author and her friends abbreviated their villeggiatura, and leaving the lovely scenery of Tivoli—its cascade and grottoes, its woods and rocks, its villas and graceful ancient temples, returned to Rome early in September.

During her short stay at Tivoli she became acquainted with Signor Cherubini, the surgeon of Castel-Madama, of whose captivity among the robbers she had heard so much at Poli. He was a man of undoubted veracity, and bore a high character, not only as an able surgeon but a good man. He related to her every particular of his capture and liberation, allowing her to write them down; and she was afterwards so fortunate as to procure a circumstantial account written by himself to a friend, which abounds with interest, and striking traits of character.

Signor Cherubini was summoned early in the morning of the 17th of August to Tivoli, to attend a sick nun and a gentleman of that place, by a factor well known to him, and named Bartolomeo Marasca. They set off on horseback together, the factor being armed with a gun.

"We had scarcely passed the second arch of the ancient aqueducts," writes the poor surgeon, "when two armed men suddenly rushed out from the thicket and stopped the way, and pointing their long guns at the factor, who was riding a little before me, ordered him to dismount. Meantime two others came out of the wood behind me, so as to have us between them and the former two. Both the factor and myself had dismounted at the first intimation. The two men behind me ordered me to turn back instantly, and to walk before them, not by the road to Castel-Madama, but that to San Gregorio. The first question the robbers asked me, was, whether I

was the prince of Castel-Madama, meaning, I fancy, the vice-prince who had passed the road a little before me. To this I answered, that I was not the prince, but a poor surgeon of Castel-Madama; and to convince them that I spoke truth, I showed them my case of lancets, and my bag of surgical instruments; but it was of no use. During our walk towards San Gregorio, I perceived that the number of brigands increased to thirteen. One took my watch from me, another my case of lancets. At the beginning of our march, we met, at short distances, four youths belonging to San Gregorio, and one elderly man, all of whom were obliged to share my captivity; shortly after we met another man, and an old woman, whose ear-rings were taken, and they were then permitted to continue their journey. In the meadows by the last ruined aqueduct, the horses which the factor Marasca and I had ridden, were turned loose, and after passing a ravine, we began to climb the steepest part of the mountain with such speed, that together with the alarm I felt, made me pant so violently, that I trembled every moment lest I should burst a blood-vessel. At length, however, we reached the top of the mountain, where we were allowed to rest, and we sat down on the grass. Marasca then talked a good deal with the brigands; showed himself well acquainted with their numbers, and said other things, which my wretched state of mind prevented me from attending to very distinctly; but seeing him apparently so intimate with the robbers, a suspicion crossed me that I was betrayed by him."

The chief brigand turned to the poor surgeon, and throwing him his lancet case, said he would think about his ransom. The surgeon represented his poverty with tears, but his ransom was fixed as high as two thousand dollars; and pen, ink, and paper being produced, he was obliged to write for that sum, which he did, with all the

earnestness that the presence of thirteen assassins, and the fear of death, could inspire. The thing was now to procure a messenger to carry this letter. This was soon done. A man was ploughing on the side of the hill lower down, and another, belonging to Castel-Madama, was seen in the flat below. They were both secured by the robbers, and dispatched with the surgeon's letter to Tivoli.

The brigands stayed where they were for three hours, when the apparition of an armed force in the country below induced them to decamp. They retired towards the most woody part of a still higher mountain. "After a long and most painful march, finding himself in a place of safety, the brigand chief halted, there to await the return of the messenger; but as that return was still delayed, the chief came up to me angrily, and said, that it might happen to me as it did to a certain inhabitant of Velettri, who had been taken by this very band, who entered his house in disguise, and carried him off to the woods, and because his ransom was long in coming, they killed him, and when the money came, the messenger found his lifeless body. I was much alarmed at this story, and regarded it as a forerunner of my own speedy death."

The terrified surgeon, who certainly in his narrative does not affect the virtue he had not, then told the robbers he might have written another letter to Castel-Madama with orders to sell whatever he possessed, and to send up the money immediately. This pleased them: another letter was written, and one of the prisoners from San Gregorio was sent off with it.

"After he was gone, I saw my companion the factor Marasca walking about carelessly among the brigands, looking at their arms, and making angry gestures; but he did not speak. Shortly after, he came and sat down

by me; it was then that the chief, having a large stick in his hand, came up to him, and without saying a single word, gave him a blow on the back of the head just where it joins the neck. It did not kill him, so he rose and cried most piteously, 'I have a wife and children, for God's sake spare my life!' and thus saying he defended himself as well as he could with his hands. Other brigands closed round him; a struggle ensued, and they rolled together down a steep precipice. I closed my eyes; my head dropped on my breast, I heard a cry or two, but I seemed to have lost all sensation. In a very short time the brigands returned, and I saw the chief thrust his dagger, still stained with blood, into its sheath: then turning to me, he announced the death of the factor in these words: 'Do you not fear! we have killed the factor because he was a sbirro; such as you are not sbirri. He looked at our arms, and seemed disposed to murmur; and if the force had come up, he might have been dangerous.' And thus they got rid of Marasca. The chief, seeing that the money for me still did not come from Tivoli, and being afraid lest troops should be sent, seemed uncertain what to do, and said to his companions, 'How shall we dispose of our prisoners? We must either kill them, or send them home;' but they could not decide on either, and he came and sat down by me. I, remembering that I had a little money about me, which might amount altogether to thirty pauls, (three crowns,) gave them frankly to him to gain his good-will. He took it in good part, and said he would keep it to pay the spy."

It now began to rain very heavily—it was four o'clock in the afternoon, and no messenger returned. At last voices were heard on the hills. The robbers feared they might be soldiers instead of messengers, but they at last

said, "come' down!" There was an anxious silence, but no one came.

"After another short interval, we heard another voice also from above on the left; and then we said, 'Surely this must be the messenger.' But the brigands would not trust to it, and forced us to go on to a place a good deal higher, and level with that whence the voice proceeded. When we reached it they all presented their muskets, keeping the prisoners behind them; and thus prepared to stand on the defensive, they cried out, 'Come forward!' In a few moments two men appeared among the trees; one of them the peasant of Castel-Madama, who had been sent in the morning to Signor Celestini at Tivoli, the other the ploughman of San Gregorio his companion. As soon as they were recognised, they were ordered to lie down with their faces to the ground, and asked if they came alone. But the man of Castel-Madama answered, 'It would be a fine thing indeed, if I, who am almost dead with fatigue, after climbing these mountains with the weight of five hundred scudi about me, should be obliged to prostrate myself with my face to the earth! Here's your money; it was all that could be got together in the town!' Then the chief took the money, and ordered us to change our station. Having arrived at a convenient place, we stopped, and he asked if there were any letters? Being answered that there were two, he gave them to me to read; and learning from them that the sum sent was five hundred crowns, he counted them, and finding the number exact, said all was well; praised the punctuality of the peasant, and gave him some silver as a reward for his trouble: his companion also received a small present."

The robbers now released the poor peasants from San Gregorio. "I, therefore," says the surgeon, "with the peasant of Castel-Madama, remained the only prisoners;

and we were made to march across the mountains. I asked why they did not set me at liberty, as they had received so considerable a sum on my account ? The chief answered, that I must await the return of the messenger with the second letter, who had been sent to Castel-Madama. I continued to press him to let me go before night, which was now drawing on apace, saying, that perhaps it had not been possible to procure any money at Castel-Madama, and that if I was to remain out all night on the hill in the cold air, it would have been better to have killed me at once. Then the chief stopped me, and bade me take good care how I said such things, for that to them killing a man was a matter of perfect indifference. The same thing was also said to me by another outlaw, who gave me his arm during our rocky journey. At length we reached the top of a mountain where there was some pools of water formed by the rain; and then they gave me some very hard and black bread that I might eat, and drink some of that water. I drank three times; but I found it impossible to eat the bread."

They continued walking over these mountain tops till midnight, when they met an ass and a shepherd. They mounted the worn-out surgeon on the ass, and the shepherd led them all to his hut, near which was a threshing-floor, and, something much better for them, a sheep-fold, whence a sheep was speedily purloined, skinned, and roasted. It was eaten, too, before the surgeon, who had dropped asleep near the blazing hearth, awoke. But the chief had reserved a few slices for him, which he now spitted on his ramrod, roasted, and gave to him, apologising for the absence of salt. Save the chief and a sentinel or two, gorged with mutton and black bread, all the rest of the banditti were fast asleep on the floor, round the fire. "I could scarcely force myself," says the surgeon, "to swallow a few morsels; but I drank a

little wine which had been found in a small barrel at the threshing-floor. This was the only time I saw any of the brigands drink any thing but water. The chief told me they were always afraid when fresh wine came, lest it should be drugged; and that they always made whoever brought it drink a good deal of it; and if in two hours no bad symptoms appeared, then they used the wine."

From the shepherd's hut they went to the sheep-fold, where the robbers possessed themselves of some lumps of boiled meat, a great coat, and some cheeses. Here the chief made the poor surgeon write another letter to Castel-Madama, telling his friends, that, if they did not send eight hundred crowns on the following day, the robbers would put him to death, or carry him to the woods of Fajola, if there was a farthing less than that sum. "I told the countryman, who was about to carry this letter, to tell my friends that if they found no purchasers at Castel-Madama for my effects, which I had ordered them to sell, they might send them to Tivoli and sell them there for whatever they would fetch. The chief of the brigands also begged to have a few shirts sent. One of the brigands proposed, I don't know why, to cut off one of my ears, and send it with the letter to Castel-Madama. It was well for me that the chief did not approve of this civil proposal; so it was not done. The chief, however, wanted the countryman to set out that moment; but the countryman of Castel-Madama said, with his usual coolness, that it was not possible to go down that steep mountain during the night; on which the chief told him he might remain in the sheepcote all night, and set out at daylight. 'But take notice,' said he, 'if you do not return by the twentieth hour to-morrow to the sheepcote with the eight hundred crowns, you may go about your business, but we shall throw Cherubini

(the surgeon) into some pit.' The peasant tried to persuade them that perhaps it might not be possible to collect so much money in a small town at so short a notice, and begged to have a little more time: but the chief answered, that they had no time to waste, and that if he had not returned by the twentieth hour, they would kill Cherubini."

The robbers again put themselves in movement. There was an improvement in their road, for instead of the rough thickets, they came to fine tall timber trees, the boles of which were comparatively smooth, save where a fallen tree here and there lay across them. But the surgeon was spent with fatigue, and sore afraid, the threats of death constantly ringing in his ear.

"I therefore recommended myself to God, and was begging him to have compassion on my wretched state, when one of the brigands, a man of great stature, who figured among them as a kind of second chief, came up to me, and taking me by the arm, assisted me to walk, and said, 'Now, Cherubini, that you cannot tell the man of Castel-Madama (whom we had left at the sheepcote waiting for daylight,) I assure you that to-morrow, as soon as he returns, you shall go home free, however small be the sum he brings. Be of good cheer therefore, and do not distress yourself.' At that moment I felt such comfort from the assurances of the outlaw, that he appeared to me to be an angel from heaven; and without thinking why I should not, I kissed his hand, and thanked him fervently for his unexpected kindness."

They next laid themselves down to sleep in a thicket, the robbers spreading sheepskins for the doctor, and the chief wrapping up his legs in his own capote. Two men kept awake as sentinels.

"I know not how long we had rested," continues Signor Cherubini, "when one of the sentinels came, and

gave notice of daybreak. 'Come to me when it is lighter,' said the chief; and all was again quiet. I turned my face so as not to see the brigands, and dozed a little, till I was roused by the cry of some wild bird. I am not superstitious; but I had often heard that the shriek of the owl foreboded evil; and, in the state of spirits in which I was, every thing had more than its usual effect on me. I started, and said, 'What bird was that?' They answered, 'A hawk.' 'Thank God!' I said, and lay down again. Among my sufferings I cannot forget the stinging and humming of the gnats, which fastened on my face and throat; but after the death of poor Marasca, I dared not even raise my hand to drive them away, lest it should be taken for a sign of impatience."

Soon after this they all arose, and after an hour's walk halted in another thicket, where they breakfasted. After their meal they lay down to sleep as before, all save one literate bandit, who amused himself by reading the romance of the Cavalier Meschino. In an hour they awoke, and filed off, one by one, to a higher station, leaving a sentinel to guard the surgeon.

"In another hour," says Signor Cherubini, "the youngest man of the robbers came to relieve the guard, who then went and joined the others. When I saw this, and perceived they were engaged in a kind of council of war, I feared that they had taken some new resolution about my life, and that the new sentinel was come to put their cruel designs in execution; but he very soon said to me, 'Be of good cheer, for to-night you will be at home!' which gave me some comfort; but as I could not entirely trust them, I had still an internal fear, which, however, I endeavoured to hide. Shortly afterwards we were called to join the rest, our station being now on the mountain commonly called Colle Picione, not very far

from the ancient sanctuary of Mentorella. There we remained the rest of the day, only going out of the way once, on the approach of a flock of goats, that we might not be seen by the goatherds; but we soon returned. Then the second chief, who said he was of Sonnino, and one of the five who went to treat with the president of Frosinone, began to talk of the political nature of their situation. He said that government would never succeed in putting them down by force; that they are not a fortress to batter down with cannon, but rather birds which fly round the tops of the sharpest rocks, without having any fixed home; that if, by any misfortune, seven perished, they were sure of ten recruits to replace their loss; for criminals, who would be glad to take refuge among them, were never wanting; that the number of their present company amounted to a hundred and thirty individuals; and that they had an idea of undertaking some daring exploit, perhaps of threatening Rome itself. He ended by saying, that the only way to put an end to their depredations would be to give them a general pardon without reservation or limitation, that they might all return to their houses, without fear of treachery; but otherwise, they would not trust to, nor treat with any one; and added, that this was the reason for which they had not concluded any thing with the prelate sent to Frosinone to treat with them. As it was, their company was determined to trust nothing but a pardon from the pope's own lips. One of the brigands begged me to endeavour to obtain from government the freedom of his wife, now in the prison of Saint Michael in Rome. Another said to me, 'Have patience, Signor Cherubini; we made a blunder when we took you; we intended to have had the prince, who, according to our information, should have passed by at that very time.' In fact, he was to have travelled that road; and just be-

fore I passed, not the prince, but the person commonly called so, the vice-prince, or agent, Signor Filippo Gazoni, had gone by, but, fortunately for him, they did not know him, because, as I understood, he was walking along leisurely, only accompanied by an unarmed boy, who was leading his horse. The banditti bit their fingers with rage when they found they had let him slip, for they said they would not have released him under three thousand crowns. The brigand who said all this had the collar of the Madonna delle Carmine round his neck, and said to me 'Suffer patiently, for the love of God.'

"Then the chief of the robbers came to me, and told me he was not very well, and desired me to prescribe for him, which I did, in writing. Another, the same who had taken my watch from me, told me that the watch did not go, and showed it me. I found that he had broken the glass and the minute hand. He said, if I had any money, he would sell it me; but I gave it him back, saying nothing, but shrugging up my shoulders. Meantime the day was drawing to a close, and the chief, taking out his watch, said it was now 'twenty o'clock.*' He called the shepherd to him, and ordered him to go back to the sheepfold which we had left during the night, and see if the countryman was come back with the answer to my second letter to Castel-Madama. In that case he ordered him to accompany him back to the place we were now at; and if he were not come he ordered him to wait three hours, and if he did not come then, to return to us alone. The shepherd obeyed, and, after about an hour and a half, he came back with the countryman and another shepherd who had been sent with him.

* It will be remembered that the Italians count time by twenty-four hours to the day. The first hour, or one o'clock, being always one hour after sunset.

They brought with them two sealed packets of money, which they said contained six hundred crowns. They also brought a few shirts, of homespun linen, which the chief had begged of me, and some little matter for me to eat, and a little wine to recruit me. But I could take nothing but a pear and a little wine; the rest was eaten by the robbers. They took the money without counting, and gave the messengers some silver for their pains; after which they permitted me to depart. And thus I found myself free from them, after having thanked them for their *civility* and for *my life*, which they had *the goodness to spare*. On my way homeward, the two men of Castel-Madama informed me, that the prisoner from San Gregorio, who was sent the day before, with the first letter to Castel-Madama for money, and who had not been seen since, had really been there, and had gone back the same day, at the hour and to the place appointed, with the sum of one hundred and thirty-seven crowns, sent from Castel-Madama; but the robbers having forgotten to send any one to meet him at the place agreed on, because we were a great way from it, the messenger returned to town with the money, after having waited till night, carrying back the intelligence that the factor had been killed, which alarmed all my townsmen, who began to fear for my life. I found that the last six hundred dollars had been furnished, half by Castel-Madama, and half by Tivoli. I went on towards Castel-Madama, where all the people anxiously expected me. In fact, a mile before I reached the town, I found a number of people, of all ranks, who had come out to meet me, and I arrived at home a little before night, in the midst of such public congratulations and acclamations as were never before heard, which presented a most affecting spectacle! I had hardly arrived when the Arch-Priest Giustini ordered the bells to be rung, to call the people

to the parish church. On the first sound, all the people flocked thither with me, to render public and devout thanks to the most merciful God and to our protector Saint Michael the archangel, for my deliverance. The priest had done the same when he first heard of my capture, and soon after, when he sent the six hundred crowns. Both times he had assembled his congregation in that very church, to offer up public supplications to the Lord, to grant me that mercy which he deigned afterwards to show. I cannot conclude without saying, that the epoch of this my misfortune will be ever remembered by me. I shall always recollect that the Lord God visited me as a father; for, at the moment when his hand seemed to be heavy upon me, he moved the city of Tivoli, and the whole people of Castel-Madama, even the very poorest, to subscribe their money, and sell their goods, in so short a time, and with such profusion for my sake. The same epoch will also always remind me what gratitude I owe to those, particularly the Signors Cartoni and Celestini, both Romans, who with such openness of heart exerted themselves in my favour. I now pray God that he will preserve me from all the bad consequences which commonly arise out of similar misfortunes."

Such is the narrative of Signor Cherubini, which, while it conveys striking pictures of crime and a lawless life, impresses the mind also with touching traits of punctuality, humanity, and generosity on the part of the peasantry and these poor Italians generally. The contrast of vice and virtue, of ferocity and kind-heartedness, is perhaps no where more evident than in Italy, where the social affections flourish in the midst of the hardest growth of crime and cruelty.

The stories told and believed by the peasantry, of the origin and initiation of most of the principal outlaws, are

horrid in the extreme. Mrs. Graham, to whom I am indebted for so many interesting and characteristic details, furnishes the following, as "a pretty fair specimen" of the whole.

"A man who had accidentally committed homicide, being afraid of the consequences, fled from the States of the Church, to Conca, in the kingdom of Naples. There, being unprovided with a passport, he was taken up and imprisoned; but 'by the Grace of the Virgin and Saint John the Baptist,' he escaped to the woods: there, after wandering a month, and being almost starved, he met the banditti, who invited him to join them. To this he, nothing loth, consented, when, to try his manhood, they gave him a piece of human flesh roasted to eat, telling him it was part of a Christian's heart! 'It might have been two hearts,' said the ruffian, 'but I would have eaten it!' He had then to perform a noviciate of two years, hewing wood, drawing water, and performing other menial offices; but, a year ago, he figured as the chief of a party among them."

But a probation infinitely more atrocious than this repast on human hearts, was related to myself in the year 1821, when I was travelling in the Abruzzi near the pass of Tagliacozzi, and not far from the frontier of the Roman states. The story was local, but my narrator, a peasant of the country, and then my guide, referred the event to rather a distant period of time.

A young man, who had been several years an outlaw, on the violent death of the chief of the troop he belonged to, aspired to be Capo-bandito, in his stead. He had gone through his noviciate with honour, he had shown both cunning and courage in his calling as brigand, but the supremacy of the band was disputed with him by others, and the state of the times bade the robbers be specially careful as to whom they elected for their leader.

He must be the strongest nerved fellow of the set ! The ambitious candidate offered to give any, even the most dreadful proof of his strength of nerve, and a monster among his companions proposed he should go to his native village and murder a young girl to whom he had been formerly attached.

" I will do it," said the ruffian, who at once departed on his infernal mission.

When he reached the village, he dared not present himself, having begun his crimes there by murdering a comrade : he skulked behind an old stone fountain, outside of the village, until near sunset, when the women came forth with their copper vases on their heads to get their supplies of water at the fountain. His mistress came carelessly gossiping with the rest. He could have shot her with his rifle, but he was afraid of pursuit, and wanted, besides, time to secure and carry off a bloody trophy. He therefore remained quiet, only hoping that she might loiter behind the rest. She, however, was one of the first to balance her vessel of water on her head, and to take the path to the village, whither all the gossips soon followed her. What was now to be done ? He was determined to go through the ordeal and consummate the hellish crime. A child went by the fountain whistling. He laid down his rifle, so as not to alarm the little villager, and presenting himself to him, gave him the reliquary he had worn round his neck for years, and which was well known to his mistress, and told him to run with it to her, and tell her an old friend desired to speak with her at the fountain. The child took the reliquary, and a piece of silver which the robber gave him on his vowing by the Madonna to say nothing about the matter in the village before one hour of the night, and ran on to the village. The robber then retired behind the old fountain, taking his rifle in his hand, and keeping a sharp look

out, lest his mistress should betray him, or not come alone.

But the affectionate girl, who might have loved him still in spite of his guilt, who might have hoped to render him succour on some urgent need, or, perhaps, to hear that he was penitent and anxious to return to society, went alone and met him at the fountain, where, as the bells of the village church were tolling the Ave Maria, her lover met her, and stabbed her to the heart! The monster then cut off her head, and ran away with it to join the brigands, who were obliged to own, that after such a deed and such a proof as he produced, he was worthy to be their chief.

NEAPOLITAN AND ROMAN BRIGANDS.

SUNDRY ANECDOTES, FACETIOUS AND SERIOUS.

Many of the stories of the Roman and Neapolitan banditti are far from being of so tragical a nature as those I have related. On the contrary, a jest book might be filled with very funny stories regarding them. The brigands were often facetious and full of frolicsome tricks, at the not very serious expense of those they waylaid, while at times they were the butts and victims to those who fell in with them.

As Lady B—— was travelling from Rome to Naples, with rather a numerous suite, she “fell among thieves.” The robbers had a tolerable good booty, but there was one excellent laugh against them. Her ladyship’s medical attendant had a large medicine chest in the carriage; this was immediately broken open by the robbers, who thought the neat and strong mahogany case must contain jewels or other valuables. They were disappointed, and somewhat puzzled, when they found a number of square crystal bottles, &c. Two of the robbers took out each one of these bottles, whose medical contents were liquid and bright—the one like rosolio, the other like maraschina di Zara. The two robbers concluded at once they were nothing else than these favourite liqueurs,

or some foreign cordial of a similar nature and excellence ; and anxious for the first draught, each put his bottle to his mouth, and did not withdraw it until he had taken a hearty swig. Then, indeed, the bottles were withdrawn, and dashed, with horrible curses to the earth ; and the two rogues, with terror in their countenances, threw themselves on the doctor, in the same breath, threatening to kill him, and begging to know whether they were poisoned, and he could cure them ? The worthy practitioner, who was an Irishman, and as such fond of a joke, would have had here a good opportunity of indulging in one, by making the trembling fellows believe for awhile that they had swallowed some infernal poison, worse than the *acqua tophana* ; but under circumstances, and in the presence of armed banditti, he thought it more prudent to tell them that they had only swallowed a little medicine, which could do them no harm, however badly it might taste ; and to reserve his laugh at them for taking his physic for sweet waters, till a more convenient opportunity.

In the next little anecdote, another brigand of another band cut a still more ridiculous figure. My friend Mr. W——, a merchant of Naples, was travelling post with a Swiss merchant, and had nearly reached the city of Capua, which is only about fourteen miles from Naples, when his carriage was suddenly stopped. It was night, but a beautiful moon—the moon of Naples, which, as the witty Marchese Caraccioli used to say, was worth a London sun, illuminated the scene, and allowed W—— to see that there were only three or four brigands near the coach, and that they had not yet knocked the postilion off the horses. W—— took his measures accordingly with great presence of mind and boldness. As the foremost brigand came to the side of the carriage, within reach, bawling and cursing for those within to

come out and be robbed, he caught hold of the ruffian by the breasts of his jacket, and called out to the postilion to gallop off for Capua, where he should be well rewarded. The postilion, who had known him before on the road, took W—— at his word, and, with a boldness rarely found in his class, whipped his horses, that went off, (as Neapolitan horses generally will do,) “an end.” As the postilion’s whip touched the withers of his steeds, a bullet whizzed past his head, but missed its aim. Away then went the carriage and the merchants and the robber, as swift as the old witches in Goethe’s *Faustus*; W——, who was a robust man, keeping a firm hold of the robber, who dangled—his head and shoulders in, and the rest of his body outside of the vehicle,—like a lamb or a calf over a butcher’s cart. W——’s companion occasionally assisted him. After numerous but vain struggles to extricate himself from their grasp, the captured brigand, whose legs were bruised in the cruelest manner against the rapid carriage wheels, and his breath almost bumped out of his body, protested it was all a mistake, and begged most piteously to be released. The merchants, however, kept the prize they had made in so curious a manner, and soon arrived at Capua. This being a fortified town, most awkwardly for travellers, placed on the high road, they had to wait some time until a letter was sent to the commandant, and permission obtained to admit them. When the drawbridge was lowered, they rolled over it, with the robber still dangling at the coachside, and delivered him at the guard-house. The next morning the merchants appeared before the justice of peace, and after their depositions had been received, the brigand was given over to the civil authorities, and cast into prison, where he lay for many months, without being brought to judgment. What finally became of him I know not; but I remember very well,

that my friend W——, though he was rather proud of the novel exploit, had so much trouble in consequence of it, and the somewhat peculiar course of Neapolitan justice, that he used often to wish he had left the fellow in the road.

The next of my concluding anecdotes of Italian banditti on which I lay my hand, is of a more tragical nature. "In the month of March 1817,"* says a popular author of travels, "I was out with one of my friends on a shooting party near Aquila, when I heard the farmers talking of robberies without number committed by the troop of *The Independence*. There was much talent, and a Turkish bravery, shown in the manner in which they were achieved. I paid little attention to all this; robberies in these parts are so common; I was all eyes to observe the manners of the people. I gave some money to a poor woman who was with child, and who, I was told, was a soldier's widow, when one said to me: "Oh, sir, she is not to be pitied, she has the ration of the banditti," and they went on to give me the following detail:—

"There is in this country a company of thirty men and four women, all mounted in a superior manner on blood horses. This band calls itself the troop of *The Independence*; its chief is a former *Marechal-de-Logis* of king Joachim.† He orders such a landlord, or such a farmer, to put such a sum of money, on such a day, at the foot of such a tree; if not, he himself will be murdered and his house set on fire. When this troop are on the march, they send orders the day before to all the farmers on their route, to have a repast ready at such

* Rome, Naples, and Florence in 1817, by (a fictitious name) the Count de Stendhal. The author's real name is Beyle.

† Murat.

an hour, for so many persons, the best that their means will afford. This service is more regularly performed than the provision for the royal household in its progress through the country.'

"About a month before I received this detail, a farmer, being piqued at the imperious manner in which the repast was ordered, sent information of it to the general, and the *Independents* were surrounded by a numerous band of infantry and cavalry; they fought their way through, covering the ground with the dead bodies of the soldiers, while not one of their own party fell. Learning the treachery of the farmer, they sent notice to him to settle his affairs. Three days afterwards they took possession of the farm, where they instituted a tribunal, and the farmer being put to the torture, confessed every thing. After deliberating together awhile in secret, they approached the unhappy farmer, and threw him into a large cauldron which was upon the fire, full of milk for making cheese. When he had boiled there for some time, they forced all the servants to eat of this infernal banquet.

"The chief could easily increase his troop to a thousand men; but he says that his talents for command will not go beyond a band of thirty, and he restrains himself to keeping up this number. He receives daily applications from people to be received into the band; but he requires a title, that is, wounds received in the field of battle, not certificates given from complaisance:—these are his very words.

"This spring, the peasants of these parts suffered very much from scarcity. The chief of the *Independents* distributed among the sufferers tickets upon the rich. The rations were a pound and a half of bread for a man, a pound for a woman, and two pounds for a woman with child. The woman who excited my curiosity, had

for a month received six of these tickets in the week for two pounds of bread each. For the rest, no one ever knows where the band are to be found, they get all the spies on their side. In the time of the Romans this chief of banditti would have been a Marcellus."

Though there is a little exaggeration in this account, the main points are correct, more particularly that which regards the robber's provident care of the poor.

"I have done more acts of charity," said one of these brigands, when he fell into the hands of the law, "than any three convents in these provinces!" And so, perhaps, he had, and at as little cost to himself as the monks, who beg themselves (as he had stolen) from others, what they live upon and give to beggars.

Though the "Independenti" may have been averse to increase their band with men, they seem to have been anxious to recruit it with women, for at the end of 1817, as I was crossing the range of mountains above Sora, that separates the Garigliano from the lake of Celano, in the Abruzzi, I heard the following event, at a little village where I stopped to refresh myself.

A pretty girl of the place, betrothed to a respectable young farmer, was carried off by the robbers as she was going with an old female relative to early morning mass at a chapel on the skirts of the village. The alarm was instantly spread, and a pursuit undertaken by all the fair captive's relatives and friends, with the agonised lover at their head. After scouring the country for several hours, without finding any trace of the brigands, many of the pursuing party, through fatigue and dread of advancing farther into the mountains towards the place where they had reason to apprehend the band was collected in force, hung back, and talked of returning home. The desperate lover would not pause a moment, but still hurried forward with a braver or more deeply

interested few. But even these few, one by one, abandoned, what seemed so hopeless or desperate a chase, or, unable to keep up with the speed of the active, young lover, followed him trembling and panting, at a distance.

He was alone, and far ahead of them, when he heard a shriek. Flying in the direction of the sound, he soon came to a wooded hollow, where he saw through the boles of the trees his affianced struggling in the arms of a desperate-looking ruffian. Such a moment, to a bold young lover, was not a moment for hesitation or calculation,—he glided through the trees, and before the robber could seize his carbine, which lay only a few feet from the spot where his struggling victim had dragged him—almost before the robber could draw his dagger, he ran his sword home to his heart. The released girl threw herself into her lover's arms; but there was yet work to do ere he could resign himself to his transports. A second brigand, who had been stationed at the edge of the wood to keep watch, heard the shout of the lover as he made the assault, and the curse of his comrade or superior as he fell beneath it, and now rushed to the spot, with that brigand yell which the poor peasantry so much dread. The young man, with his weeping mistress still hanging on his neck, drew behind a tree—he had the advantage of a trifling elevation in his favour, and as the robber had his last step on this, and came close to him, he suddenly turned round the tree, put his foot on the fallen ruffian, who still murmured in his throat, and with a pistol, shot the second villain through the body. Supporting and caressing the dear girl his valour had so opportunely liberated, he then made all the haste he could out of the hollow, and soon came in sight of the few friends who had followed him thus far, and of whom some had been brought to a stand still, and others put to a retrograde flight by the report of his pistol in the

wood. The unexpected sight, and the triumphant shouts of the lover, with his recovered affianced one, brought them, however, speedily together, and they returned to the village, with more joy than they hoped for when they set out from it on their pursuit. ☆

The band of the "Independenti" was destroyed a few months after this event.

One of the boldest deeds of resistance to the brigands was performed by a major on Murat's staff, a native of one of the German cantons of Switzerland. His name was Vollf. This officer was travelling post from Naples to Rome with despatches, in a little, low, open caleche: he had not even a servant with him. In the Pontine Marshes he was stopped by six sturdy and well armed brigands. Expecting no resistance from a single man, the robbers stood by the door of the carriage uttering tremendous curses and commanding him to descend. This he presently did; but as he left his seat he grasped a ready brace of pistols, and crossed his arms under his military cloak; and as he touched the ground he pressed a trigger on either side of him, and two of the brigands, who were almost in contact with his person, fell dead by the carriage. His sabre was as ready as his pistols—with it he cleft the head of one robber who fell, and wounded another, who then, with his two unhurt but terrified companions, took to flight, and left the officer master of the field.

The unluckiest thing the Neapolitan and Roman banditti about the frontiers did in my time was to take an Austrian colonel, on the staff of General Frimont, then commander in chief at Naples. They carried this officer to the mountains, where they kept him many days, which I have heard him describe as days of continual alarm and horror, and at last procured a good ransom for him. But a dreadful vengeance followed close on

this compliance, which had been necessitated by consideration for the safety of the colonel, whom the ruffians would most assuredly have murdered, had the ransom not been paid.) Old Frimont sent nearly his whole force of jagers, or light troops, against them. Measures were concerted with the papal government. The Austrians were allowed free ingress into the Roman states; and they hunted the brigands in the mountains from place to place, with a most persevering activity. The shepherds and other peasants were seized, and forced to act as guides. The enraged Austrians were not restrained by many scruples. Wherever they found men with arms, they shot them: in some instances they burned down whole villages. The wives of the brigands, in the course of these tragical visitations, in several instances displayed a heroism worthy of ancient Roman matrons, and the soldiery were obliged to deal with them as though they had been men. An officer of jagers with whom I was acquainted, was shot in the shoulder, from behind a rock, by one of these heroines, who, when made prisoner, and threatened with instant death unless she showed the track of the brigands, clenched her fist, and said, looking at the rock from which they had dragged her, "Unbaptised dogs that ye are! you may as well attempt to make those stones speak, as to make me divulge where are my husband, my brother, and my friends!" And even when the jagers levelled their rifles and put their fingers to the trigger, not a word could they force from the woman, who muttered something to herself, as though a prayer to the Madonna, or her guardian saint.

There is very little doubt that the Austrians shot many a poor mountaineer that was no robber, but they certainly succeeded in putting down the banditti, who from that time (in 1824) never recovered their former import-

ance and audacity, until the recent political troubles in Romagna.

The Austrians did not, however, achieve this without tremendous sufferings and losses. Frimont thought proper to keep forces in the lawless country he had purged. Those in the mountains fared pretty well, but the ranks of the poor jagers in the valley of the Garigliano, and in other low, marshy places, where they were stationed nearly a whole summer, were awfully thinned by malaria fevers of peculiar malignity. I had myself seen some time before, in the Abruzzi, a fine battalion of this truly excellent branch of the Austrian army; it was composed almost entirely of Bohemians, young and florid men. I met the same battalion at the end of this year, and found one half of it dead or in the hospital! I enquired after three of the officers to whom I had been indebted for much civility while travelling, and was told that one of them, a noble young fellow of three or four and twenty, had left his bones by the banks of the Garigliano, the other two were gone to the hospital at Naples. This is something much worse than dying in the "deadly breach," or on the field of battle, where, at least, (if they do not mis-spell our names!) we may have the honour of ornamenting a gazette of victory or glory!

It was about this time, that I, who had twice gone safely through the pass of Bovino, even when those Coryphei of banditti, the Vardarelli, were at the plenitude of their power, and who for seven years (in which I by no means led a sedentary or fixed life) had always escaped falling into the hands of a respectable band of brigands, fell unluckily under the clutches of a contemptible gang of novices and bunglers.

My friend, the Prince D'I——, among other meritorious exertions to improve his estates, had undertaken to drain an immense extent of land he held between

the mouth of the river Volturno and the lake of Patria—an enterprise in which, to the disgrace of his wealthy but unenterprising relations, and of the imbecile government of the time, which, instead of encouraging, thwarted him, he was left to fail and to ruin his fortune. The place was only some fifteen miles from the capital, and whilst the labours of digging canals and making embankments were in full activity, the prince was accustomed to go down three or four times in the week, carrying money on the Saturday to pay the labourers. I accompanied him very frequently. It was imprudent, no doubt, but though the prince had a good number of armed *guardiani* in his service, we always went without an escort and frequently without arms. Our road, after leaving the town of Pozzuoli, was chiefly through a solitary and wild country that bore rather a bad character; but no robberies had been heard of for a long time, and from the constant employment he gave to so many of the neighbouring peasantry, my friend might deem himself a popular character. In short, we had fifty times made the journey, and with good sums of money, without any *mauvais rencontre*, and thought we never should meet any, when early one fine spring morning, as we were driving in a little drosky, over a rough and narrow road that ran through fields of lupins, which in that climate grow to the height of six or seven feet, I was cut short in a story I was telling, by having a long gun put to my breast by a fellow who had been concealed in the lupin-field. At the same instant my friend received the same compliment, and our driver, a boy of fourteen or fifteen, who was riding *en postillion*, was knocked off his horse. We had each a pistol and no more in the carriage, and these we had to draw from under the apron. My friend moved his arm to catch his,—I was disengaging my arm from my cloak to do the same, when with the eye of a

military man he glanced at the fellows' guns, which almost touched our breasts, and saw they were full cocked. There was no chance—we had to draw our pistols from the pockets of the carriage and to cock them—and the robbers were swearing they would fire into our hearts, if we did not put our hands out of the carriage and instantly descend. Had we hesitated, of a certainty they would have shot us both from very fear, for as we afterwards learned they knew very well that the prince had pistols with him, and only a few days before we had been amusing ourselves on the estate by firing at a mark, when he, as a good shot, rather surprised the country people, from whom the rogues had in all probability heard of his address. Whatever I might have done, he would not have missed his aim at twenty paces—but they were only their muskets' length from us. As it was, however, our case was hopeless, and bidding me in English, which he spoke very well, step out of the carriage, and say nothing to the ruffians, he asked them what they would of him. "Your money, you robber! you infamous assassin!" was the reply of these honest men, who indeed kept up their courage, all the time they were with us and robbing us, by calling us these names and others, which those who know the low Neapolitans may fancy, but which I may not repeat.

"Take it," said the prince, pointing to the canvass bags that lay at his feet, "Take it, and go to the devil!" He was a fine, athletic, commanding figure of a man, and well known to be a brave one—even then, completely in their power as he was, they were afraid to approach him to take the money, and insisted, with the most horrible oaths, that he should descend, or they would fire upon him. The fellow who seemed to be the leader of the enterprise, had his finger on his trigger. I, who was standing by the road side with an ugly gun still at my

breast, now thought it time to say, "For heaven's sake, come down." My friend stepped out of the carriage, and again told them to take the money and be off. But now, though a novice in his profession, one of the robbers, insisting on the *faccia in terra* ceremony, swore he would shoot us unless we lay down with our faces to the ground. This we would not do. In the next instant, the villain who had approached the carriage, cried "*Ecco le pistole!*"—Here are the pistols—it's all right—never mind now!" and taking out the brace, he threw away the priming, and, after dragging them, with their pans open, through the wet grass, he then threw them into the bottom of the carriage, and drew out the money, which was contained in two canvass bags.

All the while this was performing, the fellow who stood guard over me, trembled with agitation: he shook, indeed, to such a degree, that knowing, as I well did, the crazy nature of guns of common Neapolitan manufacture, and seeing his close to my body and ready to go off, I apprehended the bungler would shoot me without intending it—and once requested he would take it from my breast, as I was unarmed and could make no resistance.

When the money had been thrown in among the tall lupins, with a repetition of the pretty epithets they had already honoured us with, they lifted up the poor boy, who was almost dead with affright, from before the horses' heads, and made us get into the carriage and drive on. They swore they would shoot us if we looked back. This, however, we did when at a short distance, and saw them mount their horses, which had been concealed from us in the thick high lupin-field, and strike across the country.

The scene of the robbery was little more than a mile from the estate, where the prince, at the time, had seve-

ral hundred men at work, and thither we now drove at a gallop.

The loss had been a heavy one—for owing to his not having made his payments to the labourers the preceding week, my friend had three thousand Neapolitan ducats, or five hundred pounds, with him in the bags. The robbers never touched our persons, or said a word about our delivering what we had in our pockets. Had they done so, I should have lost only a few dollars in silver and a watch of slight value, but they would have found on the prince rather a heavy purse of gold and a very valuable watch.

We soon reached the estate, where my friend, who had repressed his mortification and anger, gave them full vent, when a silly old man in his service as a sort of factor, recommended, as the first thing essential in such a case, that we should both get bled, to obviate the effects resulting from sudden alarm. This is a common Neapolitan practice, but, I believe, besides my friend's burst of rage and contempt, I stormed at the old fool as well, for proposing it in our case. We were presently on horse-back with a formidable posse of *guardiani*, *fattori*, and *scrivani*, all mounted and well armed, and, dividing into different parties, scoured the country in pursuit of the robbers.

From the solitude and wildness of the country, which for the greater part is covered by *pantani* or marshes, lakes, and almost impenetrable woods, we had slight hopes, when we set out, of catching them. Yet, from the shortness of the time that had elapsed, and the speed at which we rode, we were close upon them, and at one time fancied we should catch them, for we fell in with a poor old peasant woman who had just seen four men dividing two bags of money, which they were probably doing thus early for the convenience of carrying it—one

thousand five hundred ducats, in silver, in each bag, being a good weight. Encouraged by this information, we galloped on. Smarting as we were under the recent outrage, had we caught the robbers, I am confident we should have taken justice into our own hands and shot them, without waiting for the tardy decisions of the courts—but, alas! we were not so fortunate. We hunted, in vain, through a complete labyrinth of cross-roads or rather paths, beat several woods, and interrogated several shepherds, in vain, and were at last obliged to return to our canal digging and embankments, with our original loss—and with our revenge ungratified.

When we returned to Naples that night, we had the consolation of hearing from all the friends we met, “I told you so!—I knew how it would be!—I wonder you haven’t been both murdered long ago, going with money through that cut-throat country!” Some also talked about bleeding—but, in a metaphorical sense, surely my friend had been bled enough!

When we had dined we went to the minister of police, who was, where every Neapolitan who can afford it is at that time of the night, at the Opera. We went there too. The next morning, however, the prince saw the man in authority, who engaged that nothing should be neglected for the detection and arrest of the offenders. We were pretty certain that these men were not regular robbers, and that they belonged to the immediate neighbourhood of the estate. We had yet another clue—by a very extraordinary circumstance, all the money was in two-carlin pieces (in value about eight-pence each), and by tracing a sudden influx of this particular coin in any of the little towns or villages, a discovery might be made.

To be brief, in about a fortnight four men were arrested and thrown into the prison of the Vicaria at Naples. Some six weeks after their arrest, the prince, myself, and

the boy who was driving us, were summoned to that prison, and asked if we could recognise the men if they were shown us. My friend and myself both confidently affirmed that we could, for we had marked them well during our short interview. The boy was less confident.

The prince was then conducted into a hall in the prison, leaving me and the boy together. In a few minutes a jailer returned without the prince, and desired me to follow him, which I did, leaving the boy alone. I was ushered into a dark, dirty apartment, where a dozen or fifteen ruffianly looking fellows were ranged in a line, and was told to point out among them the perpetrators of the robbery. Being short sighted I went close up to this villanous file, and as soon as my eye became accustomed to the faulty light of the place, I pointed out one of my *ci-devant* calumniators.

"Touch him with your hand," cried a little man in the corner, who was noting down what passed.

I laid my hand on the ruffian, who said with a bold enough laugh "*Ah! signor mio, l'avete sbagliato gruosso!*" (Ah, sir! you have made a gross mistake.) But when I laid my hand on a second, I saw that fellow's countenance change, and that he could scarcely avoid shrinking from my touch. When my recognition was finished, I was removed to another room and left alone, and the boy was called in. When the boy had picked out his men, they brought him into the room where I was, and then led us to the prince. It appeared that my friend, and myself, and the boy had selected the same individuals, only that the boy had at first been in doubt as to one of them.

On the strength of such evidence as this alone, one might have hoped for a speedy and decisive trial. But we were at Naples! I heard nothing more of the robbers for some months, when I was called to attend a trial,

which, when I went to the court, I found, without learning why, was postponed.

In this interim there had been some talk in the neighbourhood, and even on the estate, that vengeance would be taken on us by the robbers' kinsmen and friends, for maliciously detaining in prison innocent, unfortunate men, which said individuals turned out to be, as we expected, of those parts, and acquainted with the circumstance that the prince carried good sums of money there every Saturday. For a month or so we had an escort of *guardiani*, but then went and came alone as before, frequently travelling in the darkness of night. I am fain to confess that at first, whenever I saw fellows skulking along the solitary roads with long guns in their hands, (which happened rather frequently, as, spite of the prohibition of government, nearly every peasant had his gun in that wild district,) I felt rather uncomfortable, and took care, at least, that my pistol should not be under the apron and uncocked. But this wore off, and we never heard of the prisoners' kinsmen and friends.

It was nearly two years after the offence that I was again summoned to the Vicaria. This time the trial really began; but there were only three prisoners produced,—the fourth had contracted a disease and died in the prison! Had I met either of these men in the pursuit when my blood was hot, I should most assuredly have had the heart to blow his brains out. At the moment I was first confronted with them in prison, I might have borne to see one or two of them hanged; but after this long interval, in which one of them had died in a dungeon; in which I had been occupied by so many other thoughts, and feelings, and pursuits; in which, on the whole, I had enjoyed so much, and the three men, in whose hands my life had been, now crouching before me, emaciated and broken by their long and rigorous confine-

ment, had suffered so much, I am sure, had I been able, I would have opened their prison doors and set them free. I felt sick at heart when I had to make my deposition.

One of the curious features in this extraordinary trial was, that I was never put to my oath; for when it came to that test, the presiding judge, who knew very little of me, said that my word as an Englishman and a gentleman was enough! The compliment did not prevent my astonishment at the time, and my reference in my own mind to the modes of criminal procedure in my own country. My being a protestant, I fancy, could have nothing to do in the matter, and indeed in more than one instance I had been put to my oath in the kingdom of Naples before the health officers, on arriving at a Lazza-retto.

Besides my evidence, which I thought was full and decisive, there was that of the boy and of several other witnesses, including the old woman. When I thought sentence was going to be pronounced, the court broke up, and the prisoners were remanded. I stayed at Naples five or six months longer without hearing any thing more of the robbers; what became of them I know not, for at the end of that period I quitted the country, and transferred myself to a land where justice is much more summary—I mean Turkey.

It was said by many of the Neapolitans at the time, that the robbers, who had been taken long before they could possibly spend so considerable a sum, (a fortune almost to men of their condition in that country!) had made good use of it in delaying the law's severity. What I know is, that my friend never saw a carlin of his three thousand ducats.

But what I know also is, the proneness of the Neapolitans to speak ill of each other, and to vituperate their

own government. I have, moreover, lived too many years in that country, to adopt the sweeping prejudices of hasty and unexamining travellers, or to believe all or even a tithe of what is asserted against the Italians generally; still, however, the facts were such as I have represented them, and the comments they must provoke, in whatever way we look at them, cannot be otherwise than most unfavourable to the criminal courts of Naples.

That beautiful country has now a new and young king, who has, it is said, already effected many salutary reforms; let us hope he has directed, or will direct his attention to the proper administration of justice, which will be a greater benefit to the Neapolitans, than, under circumstances, their Spanish Constitution could have proved.

And now good night to Italian brigands, and once more farewell to Italy!—a country where my brightest days have been passed, for I can never hope to retrace the pleasant period of life between seventeen years and twenty-seven—a country for which I may assert a heart-warm admiration, knowing it and living in it so long as I have done, without, I trust, incurring the suspicion of sentimentalism or affectation—a country where I have had, and am confident still have, some of my best friends, and where, next to my native land, I should prefer to end my life, and find a quiet and a humble grave.

SICILIAN BRIGANDS.

The beautiful island of Sicily, which has generally had the fortune to be as badly governed as southern Italy—almost as often subjected to foreign invasion and conquest, also abounds, like Calabria, on the opposite side of the Faro, in mountains of most difficult access, and wild swamps, once fertile plains, that aided the island in its acquisition of its proud title of “The Granary of Rome,” and has consequently abounded with banditti and men of the most desperate characters. Save in one solitary instance, there is little, however in the lives of the Sicilian robbers, different from those of their near neighbours, the Calabrians. Their mode of plundering, their places of retreat, their general habits of life were the same; but they have not been so fortunate as the continental freebooters, in having good narrators of their exploits, nor have I been so lucky as to find one good eye-witness account of them. The first of the two anecdotes I have selected, came to me in the way of oral tradition, and the name of the hero has escaped me.

The peculiarity of this Sicilian robber’s case is, that he did every thing single handed—he commanded no band, but *mannequins*, or large puppets the size of life, made and dressed up by himself, were his

passive but effective satellites. He must have been an artist of considerable ingenuity, for his figures were perfect as far as brigand costume and ferocity of expression went. Their eyes were large and staring, their whiskers most tremendous, and their mouths, of course, were never seen to relax with a smile of good nature.

His plan of operation was simply this. He set up his puppets against a bank or hillock by some road side, or among bushes or thickets hanging over the road—he contrived to make them hold long guns pointed down on the road, and their daggers and *couteaux de chasse* were visible in their bosoms or girdles. His position was always chosen where the road or mountain path was broken and tortuous, and where passengers would come suddenly in view of his troop and be covered by their musketry at the turn of a corner. While they remained more immoveable even than Austrian sentinels at their posts, he kept a sharp look out from a point whence he could see the approaches by the road on both sides. If the travellers were numerous and well armed, he withdrew his men, like a prudent commander, and hid them and himself in the thicket; but if those who approached were less formidable, he placed himself by the side of his steady troop, and when the timid wayfarers popped upon the appalling spectacle of their fierce faces, and murderous guns that seemed just joing to be fired at them, he rushed upon them, well armed as he always was, and made them perform the "*faccia in terra*" evolution, which they readily did, under the impression that they would be shot by the figures on the road side if they disobeyed. He then made them give up their money or what moveable things of value they might have with them; and this also they did with promptitude, thinking a whole band of robbers kept guard over them. As soon as this agreeable operation was perform-

ed, he ordered them to rise and return the way they had come, swearing by the most tremendous oaths, that he among them who should dare to look back, was a dead man !

When the despoiled had departed, he relieved his guard, carried off and concealed his never murmuring adherents, until he should again think proper to take the field, and instead of dividing the spoils with greedy comrades, he put them all into his own pocket.

Numerous were the robberies committed by the solitary Sicilian in this ingenious manner, and as he was continually changing his scene of action, the whole island soon rang with the fame of his formidable band. Yet, do what they would, government could never trace them. Even when, as at times it happened, a military force was in the neighbourhood of the place where the depredation was committed, and sent in pursuit with the greatest alacrity, they never could come up with the banditti. Nor could promises or threats, or actual violence and torture, ever extract from the shepherds or the peasantry, scattered about spots likely to be their haunts, a confession that they had ever supplied the dangerous band with food—had ever even seen them. It may well be conceived that the pardon of accomplices and rewards offered to such of the band as would return to society, and “turn king’s evidence” (as our Newgate phrase goes), were all thrown away, and that none of the robber’s gang would betray him. The trick, however, was detected at last. One day a considerable armed force came so suddenly upon the ingenious chief, who had not, perhaps, chosen his spot with his usual felicity, that he had not time to withdraw his faithful adherents before the *cacciatori*, or sharpshooters, were in front of them, and within rifle shot, summoning them to surrender.

“ Lay down your arms and submit,” cried the captain of the troop, “ and no evil shall befall you from us—justice will deal with you, and our government is merciful !” There was no answer returned, and as the officer saw the robbers’ guns still levelled at him and his men, he gave the word of command. “ Present arms !”

The *cacciatori* levelled their rifles, but to their surprise the robbers neither spoke nor retreated, nor dipped behind the bushes, but stood there like targets to be shot at.

“ Fire !” cried the captain.

The soldiers discharged their pieces. One of the robbers fell, another staggered, and remained declining from the perpendicular, but the others were as fixed as before, and to the no small surprise of the soldiers did not even return their fire.

The captain and his men thought they were entranced—fixed by a spell, or else planning some desperate manœuvre, nor did they fire again, until they had well looked to their flanks and rear, expecting an ambushed attack by others of this Pythagorean band.

At the second volley three more of the robbers fell, and then the soldiers boldly rushed forward to the thicket—when they had the satisfaction to find that they had been kept in awe by puppets, and had been firing at jackets and breeches stuffed with straw, two of which fierce figures, still alert, seemed to defy them to do their worst !

The mover of the *marionette* bandits had meanwhile made good his escape, but he was caught, some time after the destruction of his band, in the commission of some paltry footpad robbery, and sent to the galleys, where he used afterwards to amuse his companions in

captivity by relating his wonderful exploits as capo-bandito, or robber chief.*

The second anecdote is worth slight mention.

A friend of mine, a young English merchant, tolerably well acquainted with Sicily and its language, travelling some years ago in the interior of the island, had to pass a place that for some months had enjoyed a disagreeable notoriety as being frequented by an association that levied contributions on the road, and occasionally forgot that commandment which saith "Thou shalt do no murder." About the hour of noon he reached a solitary taverna on the side of a lofty mountain, and here, though he knew it was the very worst place on his journey, he was obliged to stop to rest his tired mules. Making a virtue of necessity, my friend followed the very sinister-looking Boniface of the miserable inn to a little room, where a table was soon spread for him. The house afforded nothing but eggs, garlic, a little macaroni, some sour bread and sourer wine; but like an experienced traveller he had brought a good basket with

* This trick has been repeated in our days in the south of France—but, if I remember well, the perpetrator of it was either a Sicilian or a Neapolitan. "My companions in the diligence," said the late Mr. Henry Matthews, who was travelling at the time from Montpellier to Beziers, "were all on the *qui vive*, for the carriage had been stopped and robbed two evenings before by a single footpad. This fellow had practised a most ingenious stratagem to effect his purpose. He manufactured ten men of straw, and drew them up in the road in battle array; and advancing some distance before them, he ordered the diligence to stop, threatening if the least resistance was offered, to call up his companions and put all the passengers to death. In this manner he laid the whole party under contribution, among whom were two Spanish merchants, whose purses were heavily laden."—*Diary of an Invalid*, p. 405. I have heard this story much better told. My narrator dwelt particularly on the rage of one of the passengers, a French officer—a *vieille moustache*—on his discovering that he had been terrified into, or out of discretion—by ten men of straw!

him, and this being handed in, he began to make a hearty meal. He was considerably advanced in this pleasant operation, and, having swallowed a glass or two of generous Faro wine, was becoming very indifferent to banditti and the dangers of the road, when he was startled by a loud fierce voice speaking outside of the inn. He ran to the window, but on looking out, he only saw his muleteer, who had evidently been disturbed in a slumber, rubbing his eyes, and the brawny back of a tall man who was gliding into the house. He thought the latter might be the landlord, and returned to his seat and table, but before he could carry the next morsel to his mouth, he heard heavy footsteps approaching the door—in the next moment, the door flew open, and a man of almost gigantic stature, with a long gun in his hand, a brace of pistols and a long knife in his girdle, entered the room. My friend started up. The intruder eyed him from head to foot, and his countenance, before none of the mildest, now relaxed, and he said, "Oh! you are an Englishman, are you?—Pray don't let me disturb you." He was about to turn out of the room, when my friend, recovering his presence of mind, paid him the compliment, never omitted in Sicily or the south of Italy, when one is found eating, of inviting him to partake with him. The intruder declined, but my friend not confining himself to a mere empty compliment (and among the Sicilians and Neapolitans it is no more) pressed him to share his meal, and the stranger, placing his long gun by his side, sat down.

He declined partaking of a pasticcio, or meat-pie, because it was a fast day, but accepted of some good biscuit and English cheese, which he declared to be excellent, and drank freely enough of the Faro wine.

By degrees, the two became very sociable. They talked about the English army that had been in Sicily,

(almost the only place I have had the fortune to visit, where the English have left grateful hearts behind them;) then of the Neapolitans, whom the stranger of course hated; then of one thing, and then of another, until my friend alluded to the state of the roads and the banditti.

"You are safe from them," said the stranger, touching my friend's glass with his own, "take my word for that! I am their chief—Don Cesare!"

My friend, though he had some slight suspicion or misgiving, concealed his emotion as much as he could, and even went so far as to mutter the formula of politeness—that he was much honoured in making his acquaintance. He could not, however, conceal his real feelings from the quick-eyed Sicilian, who said, as though his delicacy was hurt by his suspicion, "*Signor, mi fate torto* : Sir, you wrong me; I would not, for the wealth of all Palermo, hurt a hair of your head, or take from you, without your free will, so much as this bit of biscuit. I have served your countrymen—I wish they were back again. I have eaten their bread, and though circumstances have made me what I am, I will continue to be the friend of every Englishman I meet."

Quite tranquillised by these words, and the earnest manner in which the brigand uttered them, my friend gave appropriate thanks, and then made free to ask what were the circumstances that had driven him to such a dangerous profession? The robber replied without any shyness.

It appeared that Don Cesare was one of those Sicilians who, when the Neapolitans made their revolution in 1820, aimed at still further changes, or at rendering their island independent of the continental kingdom to which it has been so long linked. These men, who were very numerous, would hear nothing of the benefits of that constitution which their fellow subjects, the Neapolitans,

without knowing what it was, had adopted from the Spaniards, but insisted on separating from them and erecting Sicily into one independent state, with a king and constitution of its own. In attempting to effect this, much crime and cruelty were committed, much blood was shed; and, be it said in justice, considerable determination and valour shown by the lower order of the Sicilians, particularly at Palermo, where for some time they kept at bay a whole Neapolitan army, commanded by General Florestan Pepe, a brother to, but an abler man than, William Pepe, the hero of Rieti. The Sicilian patriots, however, could not succeed; and, not many months after, when the Neapolitan constitution was "whistled down the wind," and old King Ferdinand re-pristinated, that sovereign thought fit to investigate the offences of his Sicilian subjects. Some were arrested and thrown into prison; some hid themselves, and some, among whom was my friend's acquaintance, Don Cesare, fled to the mountains, and turned brigands. 5

When my friend's curiosity was satisfied on this head, he ventured to express his surprise at the liberty of range the robber allowed himself, and to ask if he were not afraid the people of the country would lay hands on him? To this, Don Cesare said, that besides his own gun and knife, he had always the arms of others near him; that in a minute he could surround the house where they were with his trusty followers; and that as to the country people they knew their own interests too well to interfere with those who never harmed them, and who, after all, were nothing less than unfortunate honest men that had attempted to rid the island of the Neapolitans.

By this time the refreshed mules were at the door of the hostel; so, thanking Don Cesare for his civility and communicativeness, as that preparatory step to every departure from an inn, he called the ill-looking Boniface

for his bill. The host only followed the usual practice, by asking a young Englishman somewhat more than double what he would have asked a Sicilian. My friend, without a remark, drew out his purse: the robber snatched it from him, and shut it up in his broad, horny hand. "No, sir, this shall never be—the account is not just," said he; and then turning to the host, he bade him have a conscience, and not assassinate a stranger, and an Englishman, in that way.

The innkeeper muttered something: my friend, who did not wish to have words about what after all was a mere trifle, not amounting to more than five or six shillings, begged for his purse, that he might pay the demand; but the robber would suffer no such thing, and still clenching the money in his fist, he turned again to Boniface, and said, he would *fare il conto*, or make the bill.

This accordingly he did, marking the articles, such as "a feed for two mules," "ditto for one muleteer," "bread," "fried eggs," &c. on his fingers, and then putting the precise price to each, he summed up a total which might have met the approbation of even Joseph Hume, Esq. M. P. He next counted out the money into the palm of the host, who seemed not to dare to make any other remark, and twisting up my friend's purse as though it was never more to be opened, he restored it to him with a short piece of Italian advice to be more careful of its contents.

At the inn door he helped my friend to mount his mule, and when he offered him his hand, and would have bidden him farewell, the robber whispered—"No, we must not part company so soon; there are others may meet you between this and the next town; I will see you in safety." They then went on, the robber striding by the side of my friend's mule, and talking all the way in

a cheerful tone. They had not gone much more than a mile when three wild-looking fellows were seen descending from the mountain's side towards the road, which there ran through a deep winding hollow. As these men approached, they called on the travellers to stop, and had levelled their guns at them, when Don Cesare, who had been concealed from them by the mule, and the person of my friend, stepped forward in the road, showed himself, waved his hand backward, and cried out in a voice like thunder, "*In dietro, canaglia ! iddi sun amici ! Santu Diavoluni !* in dietro !*" or, "Back, you blackguards, these are friends ! Saint Devil ! get ye back." The three ruffians recovered their guns, threw them over their shoulders, and without saying a word returned up the mountain.

The robber-chief took no notice of what had happened, but walking a little ahead of the mules that he might be seen, continued in conversation on indifferent subjects until they came to a fair piece of newly-made road, inclosed on either side by magnificent hedges, (common things in Sicily and Calabria,) composed of the gigantic aloes, Indian-fig plants, and high flowering geraniums. "Here you are safe," said the robber, grasping my friend's hand ; "this road winds round the hill to the town of San Giovanni, and here we must part !"

"Yes," said the muleteer, addressing my friend, "Yes, Don Giorgio, it is only a quarter of an hour to San Giovanni !"

"Don Giorgio !" said the outlaw : "is that your name ? It is the name of your king whom I have served ! May

* I do not know why, but the Sicilians and Calabrians have made his satanic majesty a saint. *Santu diavolu*, with its augmentative *Santu diavoluni*, is continually in the mouth of both. It is as much their habitual oath as certain two monosyllables are those of the English.

the blessed Virgin go with you," and giving a last friendly squeeze to my friend's hand, he turned back, shouting as he went, "*Viva il Re Giorgio!*" Long live King George!

He had not been gone many minutes, when my friend heard one of those long shrill whistles which the Sicilians and Calabrians are particularly expert in producing, by applying their fingers to their tongue and lips. The young Englishman turned his head, and presently saw above the hill round which he was winding, the gigantic figure of the outlaw, accompanied by three other men, striding up the mountain. The chief also happened to turn his head nearly at the same instant. He waved a silk handkerchief, and again shouting "*Viva il Re Giorgio!*" thus took his last farewell!

The muleteer, who had preserved a respectful silence, only broken by a word or two, as long as the outlaw was with them, now gave way to his tongue. "Don Cesare," said he, "is a robber—there is no doubt of that; some say an assassin, though, for my part, I believe he has only killed five or six Neapolitans; but there is much that is good in him for all that!" After my friend's experience, it was not for him to contradict the muleteer's assertion.

SPANISH BRIGANDS.

For brigands, Spain stands next in rank to the kingdom of Naples and the states of the church. The reasons are too obvious to require any explanation here. In comparing the Italian with the Spanish bands, from the accounts I have read and heard, I should be inclined to say that the latter were generally more brutal and ferocious, and less romantic—if, after all I have said, the reader will still deem the term romantic at all applicable to the Italian banditti.

POLINARIO.

My first anecdote of Spanish robbers is rather of an agreeable character. It is extracted from the work of a recent traveller, from Mr. Inglis's "Spain in 1830." Our countryman in the course of his peregrinations, stopped one night at a posada, or inn, in the south of Spain, and sat down to sup at a sort of *table d'hôte*, with such company as had gathered at the said place of repose and refecton.

"Towards the conclusion of supper, a guest of no small importance took his place at the table : this was no other man than the celebrated Polinario, during eleven years the dread of half Spain, and now following the honest

calling of guard of the Seville diligence. I never saw a finer man, or one whose appearance more clearly indicated the profession which he had abandoned. I could not help fancying that his countenance expressed a certain lawlessness of mind, and contempt of peaceable persons like myself, which an assumed suavity of manner was unable altogether to conceal: this suavity of manner is, however, very remarkable, and I believe is in perfect accordance with his conduct when a robber; for Polinario was never guilty of any act of wanton cruelty or barbarity, but along with the most fearless courage, he always evinced a certain forbearance, not uncommon among Spanish banditti; but in him, having a deeper seat than the mock civility of a Spanish thief, arising rather from a softness at heart, which afterwards led to a change in his mode of life. The history of this change is curious, and I pledge myself for its authenticity.

“The usual range of Polinario was the northern part of the Sierra Morena and the southern parts of la Mancha; and here he remained during eleven years.

“A few years ago, understanding that the archbishop of Gaen would pass the Sierra Morena in his carriage, without other attendants than his servants, he lay in wait for the prelate, and stopped his carriage. The archbishop of course delivered his money; and Polinario having received it, asked his blessing: upon this, the archbishop began to remonstrate with the robber, setting forth the heinousness of his offences, and the wickedness of his life: but Polinario interrupted the archbishop, by telling him it was of no use remonstrating upon his manner of life, unless his grace could obtain a pardon for the past; because, without this, it was impossible he could change his mode of living.

“The archbishop of Gaen is a good man; and feeling a real desire to assist Polinario in his half-expressed de-

sire of seeking a better way of life, he passed his word that he would obtain for him his majesty's pardon; and Polinario came under a solemn promise to the archbishop, that he would rob no more. In this way the matter stood for eleven months; for it was eleven months before the archbishop could obtain the pardon he had promised; and during all this time Polinario was obliged to conceal himself from the pursuit which the offer of a considerable reward had long before instigated. At length, however, the pardon was obtained; and Polinario was free to lead an honest life. He admits, however, that he is not contented with the change, and makes no hesitation in saying, that the promise made to the archbishop alone prevents him from returning to his former profession; but he says the archbishop kept his word to him, and he will keep his word to the archbishop."

During the peninsular war, Napoleon, who then drew his resources from so many countries, and had established the conscription, and by making war the only profitable occupation, had awakened a military spirit nearly all over Europe, had, as it will be remembered, a number of Italian regiments in the field. Besides the officers of these regiments, many young Italians of good families, particularly Neapolitans, were to be found on the staff of King Joseph, who had done ill, as far as his happiness was concerned, to quit the sure throne of Naples for the very uncertain one of Spain. Though his government was not a very popular one at Naples, during the short time it lasted, the monarch had made such good use of his leisure, and of the lax morality then prevailing, that at his departure for Spain, he was sincerely regretted by a number of gay dames, who, having no longer his liberality to look to, warmly recommended their brothers, their cousins, &c. to be provided for in his new kingdom.

It was curious enough to observe, that, in many instances, these young Italians, now sent to assist in the subjugation of Spain by the French, were descended from Spanish families, whose founders had served and found fortune in the Spanish armies that had subdued Italy, and under the great Captain Gonsalvo di Cordova and others, had established the dominion of Spain in the Milanese and the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, in spite of all the efforts of the French. The shoots that Spain had thrown out in foreign conquest, were now returning to strike at her own proud trunk and root! The hero of the following robber story was not, however, of Spanish lineage, but descended from an ancient family originally of the republic of Genoa, and long settled in the kingdom of Naples, where their possessions, particularly in Calabria, were at one time of an enormous extent: nor though on the staff of King Joseph, and a personal favourite of his, did Don Francesco owe his post, or his hopes of advancement, to sister or cousin, or any relation, or connection, or friend of the female gender whatsoever. The name and rank of his family had had their influence of course, and Joseph, who was far from being either adventurous or courageous himself, admired those qualities in others—and there was not a person about him more distinguished by them than the young Italian.

Whenever there was any thing daring to be done, whenever there was a message to be carried that required extraordinary speed, of all the aides-de-camp and others, Don Francesco was always the first to offer himself. But there appeared to be no danger whatever, and there was no need for haste when he met with his adventure. The intrusive king had been for some time at Madrid. England had not yet armed Wellington to do wonders, Spain seemed prostrate before the French, and though an occasional deed of blood showed their antipathy to the in-

truders, the destructive guerilla warfare was not yet commenced; and though an occasional robbery was heard of, the country was not held as being much infested by banditti, and officers came and went, only accompanied by their orderlies.

Don Francesco was, therefore, despatched one morning, with only one man, a steady, old Polish trooper, to carry some instructions to a small corps of the French army in cantonments, not many miles from Madrid. Having delivered these, he was to visit some outposts scattered round the country, and then return to head-quarters at his own leisure, or rather, there was no precise time fixed for his return. He arrived safely at the cantonments, and having finished his short business, would have proceeded farther that evening, but the colonel commanding there was a countryman, and an old friend, and he pressed him to stay dinner, and then it was too late to go any further that night. At the colonel's table were two young Frenchmen, who talked of relieving the ennui of "country quarters" the following morning by a shooting excursion, and as the ground they intended to beat was the same over which Don Francesco's road lay, it was agreed, not only that they should start together, but that he, having finished his inspection, should join them, and take a day's sport.

Accordingly, they set off in high spirits the next morning, Don Francesco followed by his staunch Pole, but the French officers with no attendant, save a young, naked legged Castilian, who carried their game bags, and acted as guide. They parted company at the head of a little valley or hollow, about two hours before noon. There was no inn or posada near, but a scattered village seemed to lie midway up the hollow, and here it was agreed Don Francesco should join the young Frenchmen early in the evening, and after passing the night at the

village, they were to continue their sport on the morrow. As he rode on his way he heard rather an active firing on the side of his friends, and anxious to have a share of such good sport, he put spurs to his horse, and did not draw rein until he came up to one of the French pickets. He here finished his business in a very short time, and obtaining a fresh horse, proceeded to do the rest of his duty. He now found he had more ground to go over than he had imagined, and when he returned to the post where he had left his own horse, it was much later than he could have wished. To increase his comfort, a serjeant of tirailleurs, who had the command, assured him that in spite of all the troops scattered over the country, the Spaniards were daily becoming bolder, and showing that they detested the French—that a commissary of the army, and an officer of the line, had been assaulted, not many days before, in the very district he had to traverse, and had escaped being murdered almost by miracle; and finally, he added, that even before the French invasion, the place bore a bad name for robbers. The young Neapolitan thought his friends had been rather unlucky in the choice of their shooting ground; but he could hardly fancy breaking his engagement, and late as it was, he mounted his own steed, which was by this time well refreshed, and set off at a hand-gallop for the glen where he had left them. The old Polish trooper, who had heard the dialogue between his master and the serjeant, would, of a certainty, have rather *rebroussé chemin*; but he was accustomed to danger, he was piqued too by the seeming indifference to it in Don Francesco, and he could not conceive (he had yet to learn what the Spaniards were) that the peasantry would dare to attack an officer of rank so near the French forces.

They reached the glen where they had left the two Frenchmen in safety, but it was dark, and when they

rode up to what they had taken in the morning for a village, nearly every white spot, instead of being a house, was a calcareous rock. There were, however, among these deceptive projections some half dozen of miserable cottages, where Don Francesco confidently expected to find his friends; but where, on enquiry, he found them not, and if the words of the inhabitants were to be taken, no such persons had been seen there since the morning. Rather inclined to be angry at his friends for their want of punctuality, than to suspect any thing had happened to them, Don Francesco was about to turn his horse's head, when an old goatherd addressed him, and told him he had seen the two strangers cross the hills at the top of the glen, and that doubtless they would be found at a farm-house in that direction—not more than a good league off, where the game was most abundant.

Spirited on by this intelligence, the young Neapolitan took the direction pointed out to him, and, darker and darker though it became, he and his follower contrived to make good speed for half an hour, when they thought they ought to be near the said farm-house. But when they slackened their pace, and peered through the night-gloom, and listened to catch, if it might be, the barking of a dog, or the tinkling bells of a sheep-fold, or any thing to announce the neighbourhood of a farm or a cottage, they could see nothing, but that the rough path they had hitherto followed now lost itself in a labyrinth of other paths, and nothing in the world could they hear but the panting of their horses and the murmur of the night-wind among the brush-wood that grew on every side of them. The country also seemed to be wilder and more desolate even than that they had left—and a country more treeless, houseless, uncultivated, barren, and utterly desolate, than that round Madrid, is scarcely to be found in Europe. Don Francesco, however, was not to be turned

back; and, indeed to go back to the pickets, or to attempt reaching the cantonments, would now have been as difficult as to find out the farm-house. He did, therefore, what is perhaps as wise a thing as a man can do under such circumstances, he threw the reins on his horse's neck, and let him choose his own way. The sagacious creature had not gone far, when he drew up his head, and then threw out his nostrils, and then neighed, and the moment after a little glimmering light gave an additional proof that they were near some habitation. "It is the farm-house we are seeking," thought the young man; and going on in the direction of the light, they soon found themselves before a long, low wall, in which, after groping for some time, they found a strong wooden gate. As they struck upon this, the light disappeared—then they heard a slight noise—and the light re-appeared, but lower down than it had been seen before. They then heard the sounds of the opening of a door, and then a light was seen approaching them. Nothing doubting but that his friends were within, Don Francesco now called out their names. There was no answer given; but presently the gate before which he stood was unbarred, and they were admitted into an open yard, which seemed to have stabling and barns round three of its sides. From the readiness with which they had gained admittance, both master and man were confirmed in their opinion that their friends must be there, and retired to rest; and they asked no questions, until their conductor, an old Spaniard, led them to the door of the house, on whose threshold there stood another Spaniard, who seemed to wear a hospitable smile on his countenance. After a courteous salutation, the young officer asked whether there were not two Frenchmen within.

They were not—they had not been seen—but had they come, there would have been a welcome for them,

as there was for those caballeros who now arrived, was the reply.

The fellow's manners were good; there seemed an air of mildness and respectability about him—the night without was as dark as ever, and a cold rain, that had been threatening for some time, now began to pelt most pitilessly; so wishing his friends, wherever they might be, as civil a host and as good a lodging as he seemed to have lighted upon, he gave his horse to his orderly, and walked in. The apartment had nothing remarkable about it. Its inmates were, an old woman, another man, whose countenance was not very prepossessing, but not much wilder or more forbidding than the general run of the dingy Castilian peasants, and to these was presently added, besides the host who had entered with Don Francesco, a young and rather pretty girl, who seated herself near the fire, which burned in the centre of the room. To her, of course, the young soldier's attention was presently turned. He saw her lean her head on both her hands, as though suffering from pain; and then he saw, or fancied he saw, that she looked at him now and then—looked at him with uneasiness. Perhaps, however, this only struck him afterwards.

As an Italian, whose language is itself so like to the Spanish, Don Francesco had not had much difficulty in learning the latter idiom; he had now, moreover, been some months in the country, and being rather of a literary turn, he had paid some attention to its books and grammar, &c.—things which the French were very *apt* to despise. And then the French, generally, as we all know, have a remarkable inaptitude for languages; so much so, that there was not one in a thousand among them, who, even after several years' residence in Italy, could express himself in that beautiful tongue with any thing like propriety of idiom or accent.

As he spoke to them, the Castilians made the remark with astonishment, that Don Francesco spoke such Spanish as they had never heard from the mouth of a Frenchman.

"I am no Frenchman," said he.

This assertion evidently produced a considerable effect: the Spanish girl fixed her large black eyes on him; the man, who seemed the master of the house, asked him of what country then he was.

When he replied he was an Italian, the host rejoined, "Oh, then you are half a Spaniard—but you are here with the French army after all!"

As Don Francesco was thinking he did not altogether like the tone with which the last words were pronounced, and the expression of countenance that accompanied them, his Polish trooper, who had been busy with the horses, came in, and stepping up to his master, whispered in French, "I hope, sir, we have got into friendly quarters—but there is something I don't quite fancy—there are several desperate looking fellows in the stable, and I am almost sure, the old goatherd who directed us hither is one among them!"

Startled as he was at this information, the young soldier, however, preserved his presence of mind: he felt that if they had really fallen into a trap, escape by force was utterly impracticable; and that the best thing he could do, was to keep a watchful eye on his friends within the house, and to tranquillise his faithful companion, who might be on his guard as to what was going on without. So, affecting to treat lightly the trooper's suspicions, and only telling him to keep the saddles on the horses, and to have their reins ready on their necks, he gave him part of the supper and wine his host had provided, and dismissed him, with a recommendation to sleep as lightly as though he were picketed in the field with the enemy close before

him. While he took his own supper, Don Francesco continued his conversation with the Spaniards. So quiet and well disposed did they all again seem, that his apprehensions almost entirely left him, and he taxed himself with folly for having suspected any evil at their hands.

It was by this time waxing late—two of the Spaniards and the old woman had retired one by one, very devoutly wishing him "*la buena noche*," and that the saints might guard him. The young girl lingered still, but she, too, withdrew at last. Don Francesco then enquired his way for the morrow's journey, and expressing his intention of setting off at daybreak, begged to be shown to his place of rest. His complacent host regretted that his accommodations were not better, and led him up a tottering wooden staircase, or rather a broad-stepped ladder, into a large dark room, which seemed to prolong itself over part of the stabling. There was a narrow window at each end of the room, from one of which he fancied the light that first attracted him must have proceeded. The floor of the room was partly covered with grain and household provisions, but near the farther end, to which they advanced, there were two low couches, one of which was already occupied by somebody with a large Spanish capote thrown over him. The host, putting his finger to his mouth, as if to prevent talking, which might disturb the sleeper, pointed to the mattress in the opposite corner ; and no sooner had Don Francesco thrown his military cloak upon it, than whispering him a good night, the host instantly withdrew, and carried the lamp with him. As he descended the ladder, he drew a trap-door after him, and the young soldier heard the noise, as if of a sliding bolt, to secure the door.

This jarred unpleasantly on Don Francesco's nerves. Instead of throwing himself at once on the couch, he

grasped his pistols, which he had kept about his person, and drawing his sword, groped his way to the upper end of the room by which he had entered. The intense darkness of the night had somewhat abated—a glimmering of uncertain light penetrated through the low narrow windows which were opposite to each other, and fell on two small spaces of the flooring, but all the rest of the long room was wrapped in a gloom so dense, that he could not see the bright blade of the weapon he held in his hand. With some difficulty he piloted himself through the heterogeneous materials that encumbered the apartment, and by kneeling down and feeling the rough boards with his hand, he detected an iron ring which raised the trap-door. To his surprise and relief, when he applied his arm's strength to this, the door opened at once, and proved his ear had deceived him as to its being fastened. He again thought himself a fool for harbouring suspicion; but before returning to his resting-place, he listened a few seconds at the aperture he had made by only partially lifting up the door. At first all was silent as though he had held his ear over an opened tomb, and then he heard the low murmuring of a voice below as if in prayer. Encouraged by the latter circumstance, and fully deciding once more that he was in the hands of good honest people, he groped his way back to the couch. Still, however, spite of himself, there was a lingering of doubt and suspicion, and before he threw himself on his mattress, he crept across the room to the side of his sleeping companion. Whoever this was, he seemed to sleep most peacefully—with his capote drawn over his head, not even his breathing could be heard.

“People do not sleep this way in a den of robbers and murderers,” thought Don Francesco, who at length wrapped his own mantle about him and laid himself down. All remained quiet—he thought a little of the

events of the day, and his disappointment, and again hoping that his unpunctual friends had come to no harm, and had found as good lodgings as he had done, he gave way to fatigue and drowsiness and was falling asleep—when he was suddenly started by the creaking of a door. Quick as he was, before he grasped his sword and pistols and rose to his feet, a door, which he had not observed in the darkness, was opened between him and the bed on the opposite side of the room, and a little yellow light, as though of a lamp screened, rushed into the apartment.

Though the prospect of a hopeless struggle now presented itself, and the chill of despair fell on his heart, the young soldier levelled his pistol with a steady aim, and had nearly pressed the ready trigger, when he saw that the figure which stole into the room was that of the young Spanish damsel, whose conduct and looks below stairs had attracted his attention.

"Stranger!" said she in a fearfully agitated whisper, "put up your arms and follow me—there is hardly a minute between you and murder!"

"Ah! is it so!" said the young man, gasping for breath.

"You will be the first guest that leaves this room alive," said the girl: "But haste, or you will be too late!"

"Then let me rouse also this man who sleeps so soundly," said Don Francesco.

"Think of yourself—he needs not your care!" said the girl.

Even in that extremity of danger the brave soldier could not reconcile himself to the thought of leaving a fellow creature to the knife, and he stepped to the other side of the room. The trembling girl moved with him, drew the capote from the body, and holding down the

lamp she held, and turning away her own eyes, disclosed to those of Don Francesco the ghastly countenance of one of the young Frenchmen he had been in search of.

As to what passed after this horrid disclosure,—as to his feelings or his actions, for some seconds, the young man could never render an account. What he first recollected was standing at the head of a flight of rough stone steps that descended from what appeared to be a hayloft into the courtyard, with the Spanish girl pointing to the wall that enclosed the court. While standing here listening to the directions the girl was giving him, as to the road he was to take to reach Madrid—he heard the well-known voice of his poor faithful trooper utter a French exclamation, and the next instant the report of a carbine shot, and then the noise of a deadly scuffle proceeded from that part of the stable which now seemed to be immediately beneath his feet.

“Oh, fly!—it is your only hope—may God go with you!” muttered the agonised girl, still pointing to the wall. More than half stupified, Don Francesco crept down the stone steps; but as he descended, he saw a man who had come out from the lower apartment or from the stable, advance across the courtyard to the narrow space between the foot of the stairs and the foot of the outer wall of the farm he had to climb. He then heard a long heavy groan—and then four more Spaniards came out and joined the man he had just seen. “The dog of a Frenchman is done for,” said one, whose voice seemed to be that of the host, “but he has wounded me sorely in the arm. Quick, however! the noise will have awakened his master, and we shall have trouble in despatching him!”

Don Francesco turned his head—the light and the girl were gone—the door at the top of the staircase

seemed closed; but dark as it was, and though he had now crouched in the smallest compass possible under the rude stone ballustrade that ran along one side of the steps, he dreaded they must discover him even from below as he lay there, for by this time one of the men had brought out a lamp.

"He remains quiet, however, as yet," whispered another voice below; "perhaps the report of the fellow's gun has not awakened him—let us up, and finish him at once." The speaker's foot seemed to be on the first step of the stone stairs, the light moved in the same direction, and it was impossible Don Francesco could have escaped another moment, when a shrill female shriek was heard at the opposite end of the house, and a voice cried "The Frenchman!" "The officer!" The Spaniards, fancying their aroused victim was there attempting his escape, rushed in that direction; whilst Don Francesco, understanding and availing himself of the feint which evidently proceeded from the girl, glided down the stairs, vaulted over the wall with some difficulty, and ran with all his speed from the accursed spot.

Though out of their lair, he was still far from being out of danger. They had horses, and would no doubt speedily pursue him; and then, in the darkness of the night, and in a wild country he had never before traversed, he could not tell whether he was following his young deliverer's directions, or running into fresh scenes of danger—perhaps returning on the very den from which he had escaped. Indeed, in a very short time he heard the hollow, rapid beat of horses' hoofs on the dark heath. The sounds did not, however, seem to approach—on the contrary, they waxed fainter and fainter, until they died away in the direction he fancied must be immediately opposite to that he was taking.

Thus encouraged, he summoned up all his strength, and ran for a long time ; but the returning agony of his apprehension may be conceived, when he was suddenly brought to a pause by hearing the sound of horses' feet right before him, and advancing to meet him. There was not a tree, a bush, on the wide open heath, to conceal him from his blood-thirsty pursuers. Fortunately, however, he had retained his dark grey cloak, and wrapping himself in this, he laid himself flat on the ground, hoping that its colour, which assimilated with that of the heath, would prevent him from being discovered. The galloping horses came nearer and nearer ; he saw them take the very direction of the spot where he lay. And now another dreadful thought struck him. It might very well be that one of the villains in their haste had mounted his own favourite steed, which, if it came near where he lay, was almost certain to betray him, by stopping or neighing, and thus he would be discovered, even if he escaped the searching eyes of the murderers. He grasped his pistols ; his sword was out of its sheath, as it had been since his retreat down the stairs of the house, and thus he lay with the resolution to sell his life dearly.

Meanwhile the horsemen came close upon him—so close, that at one time he thought he should be ridden over ; but they passed the spot where he lay without discovering him. He remained supine as he was till the sounds of the hoofs and the villains' dreadful imprecations died away on his ear, when he rose, and again ran forward for some time at the top of his speed.

By this time the first rays of morning began to appear. Light, however, was of little service to him in that monotonous, unknown country, as to assisting him to find his way, but, on the contrary, if his pursuers still persisted in their search, it would betray him to

them. He had run himself out of breath, and was so overcome by fatigue, that he was obliged to throw himself on the ground. Having rested for awhile, he resumed his journey, and soon came to a tolerably good, and what seemed a frequented road. As he hesitated here what direction he should now take on this road, the distant, measured sounds of a drum faintly struck his ear; he bent his head to the earth, and then heard distinctly enough that it was a French drummer beating the reveillé. Cheered by these welcome tones, he pursued his way, and in about a quarter of an hour, as day broke into fulness of light, he saw a low, little village close before him, with a detachment of French troops mustering on its outskirts. Setting up a shout of joy, he ran on to the village, where he was presently safe among friends and comrades. His tale of horror was soon told, and a plan of proceeding arranged; but more than two hours passed ere he was sufficiently refreshed to mount a horse, and head the troops in search of the assassins. Unfortunately, too, there was no cavalry on the spot; and what with the difficulty of retracing his steps, and time lost on false scents, it was near noon when Don Francesco drew up the troops before a solitary farm-house, which, from the little he had been able to see of it in the obscurity of the preceding night, he thought must be that which he had escaped from. After having shouted in vain, the soldiers scaled the walls, and burst open the gate. The door of the dwelling-house was merely secured by a latch, and when he entered it, if the absence of every inmate had not been proof enough, Don Francesco could have sworn to the apartment. He rushed up the ladder to the accursed loft, expecting to find the body of his friend, but it was gone, and no trace of blood, or of any thing connected with him, was left there. Some of the soldiers meanwhile had gone into the stables,

which they found as empty as the rest of the house—all the horses had been removed, as also the body of the poor Pole; but on some straw, in a corner of the stable, they found a little pool of blood. This was the only evidence of crime the premises retained. On looking over the house, it was discovered that the provisions, and nearly all the portable articles of household furniture, (few, and simple enough in Spain!) had been carried off. It was vain to think of pursuing the fugitives; they failed in their search after the bodies of the young officer and the Pole; and then Don Francesco marched his men to the huts where, on the preceding night, he had spoken with the goatherd. The huts were as empty as the farm-house!

To conclude a long story, the murderers were never caught. The companion of the murdered Frenchman, and the boy that had accompanied them, were never more seen or heard of; and it was supposed that, separated by accident, or the design of the Spaniards, from his friend, this second Frenchman met the fate of the first, and that the guide also was killed.

I set aside two or three horrible and disgusting stories of Spanish robbers to make room for the following interesting anecdote, (communicated to me by my kind and talented friend Mr. Brockedon,) which shows them in a better light.

A short time after the French war, and the restoration of Ferdinand VII., whose conduct made many of the loose guerilla parties continue out in the country as brigands, an English merchant arrived one evening at a small mean town, at the foot of the Sierra Morena. In the posada of the place where he took up his lodging for the night, he met a Spaniard of a commanding figure, and of a sharp, intelligent, but amiable countenance. Much struck with his appearance, the Englishman en-

tered into conversation with him, and was still more delighted by his frank spirited style of address and talking. Before supper was ready, the two had established that sort of traveller-intimacy, which is not perhaps the less delightful because it must finish in a few hours, and the parties, in all probability, never meet again; and when the meal was served, they sat down to it together, each, apparently, anxious to know more of the other. They conversed together during the progress of the supper, and long after it was over, until the sinking and flickering lamps on the table warned the Englishman it must be time to retire to rest. As he rose to do so, the Spaniard, with all his former frankness and gentlemanly manner, asked him which way his road lay on the morrow. The English merchant replied across the Sierra Morena, and indicated the road he meant to take.

The Spaniard, shaking his head, said he was sorry for this, as he had reasons to suspect that that very road at that very moment was beset by robbers, from whose numbers and activity there was no escape.

The Englishman confessed that this was unpleasant news, particularly as the affairs that called him towards Madrid were urgent.

"But cannot you stay where you are a day or two?" replied the Spaniard; "by that time they may have shifted their ground, and you may pass the mountains without meeting them."

The Englishman repeated that his business was urgent, said he was no coward, that he had hitherto travelled in Spain without any misadventure, and hoped still to do so.

"But, my good Señor," replied the Spaniard, "you will not cross the mountains to-morrow without being robbed, take my word for that!"

"Well, if it must be so, let them rob me," said the

English merchant ; " I have little money to lose, and they will hardly take the life of an unarmed and unresisting man !"

" They have never been accustomed so to act—let it be said to the honour of the band, they are not such cowardly assassins," replied the Spaniard, who was then silent, and seemed to be musing to himself.

The Englishman was beginning to call up one of the servants of the posada, to show him to his resting place, when his companion, raising his hand, said,

" Not yet, Señor, not yet ! listen !" and he continued in an under tone. " It was my fortune some time since to have to cross the Sierra Morena, alone, like you ; it was occupied then as now, by the *Salteadores* ; but I met a man, also alone, as you have met me, who said he had rendered the captain of the band some service, and that he could give me a pass which should cause my person and my property to be respected by the robbers, and enable me to cross the mountains with perfect safety."

" A much better thing this than a king's passport," said the astonished Englishman. " Pray what was it ? and did it succeed ?"

" It was only a button," replied the Spaniard : " it did all that had been promised, and perhaps it has not yet lost its charm—I will give it you, here it is !"

After searching in his pocket, the Spaniard produced a curiously-fillagreed silver button, and placed it in the hands of the Englishman, begging him to be careful of it, and to present it to any robbers that might attack him in the Sierra.

" But were *you* really attacked on your journey ?" enquired the merchant.

" The button was respected by all the robbers I met, and I believe I saw them all," said the Spaniard ; " but

ask no more questions, and take care of the button ; to-morrow you will see whether it have lost its charm."

With many thanks, the Englishman took his leave, and went to bed. On the following morning, when he continued his journey, the silver button ran in his head for some time. But it was not until noon, as he was toiling up one of the most rugged of the mountain paths, that he had the opportunity of trying its virtue. There his guide, who rode before him, was suddenly knocked off his mule, by a blow from the butt-end of a musket, and the next instant three other guns were levelled at the Englishman's breast, by men who stepped from behind a rock. The attack was so sudden, that his ideas and recollection were disturbed, and he put his hand in his pocket, brought out his purse, and delivered it to the robbers, who were calling him all sorts of opprobrious names, before he thought of his silver button. But when the recollection came to his mind, and he produced it, much doubting of its efficacy, the oaths of the Salteadores were stopped at once, as though a sacred relic had been held before their eyes ; they returned him his purse, earnestly entreated his pardon for all that had happened, and informed him that it was their bounden duty to see the bearer of that button safe across the mountains. Accordingly, on went the merchant with the brigands for his guard, he blessing the silver button, and they showing him every possible attention and respect. On their way they met with other robbers, which proved how formidable was the band, and how impossible it would have been to escape them without the charmed button.

At length they came to a low, solitary house in a wild dell, far away from the beaten path across the Sierra, which they had abandoned for rocks that seemed never to have been trodden. Here the merchant was told he might stop and refresh himself. Nothing loth, he dis-

mounted and turned to the door, when his companion at the posada of the preceding evening—the donor of the magical button—met him on the threshold, with the words and the gestures of an hospitable welcome! His dress was changed—he now wore a splendid kind of uniform, the jacket of which was of velvet, embroidered with gold, but the Englishman recognised his commanding figure and impressive countenance in an instant, and gave him his hand as a friend.

“I got here before you,” said the captain of the banditti, for such in fact was the donor of the button, “and have prepared a good dinner for you, being very certain that what I gave you last night would bring you in safety under my roof.”

The Englishman expressed his gratitude, and they sat down to dine. The bandit’s dishes were savoury and good, and his wine was better. As the wine warmed the Englishman, he again expressed his gratitude, and then ventured to say how astonished he was that a person of his host’s manners, and one capable of such kind and generous feelings and actions, could lead such a kind of life.

The robber drew his hand across his dark brow and fiery eyes, and said,

“These are times when thieves and traitors thrive in the royal court and the offices of government, and honest patriots are driven to the highway. As a guerilla, I shed my blood for my country, for my king, who, when he returned, would have left me to starve or to beg! But no matter—this is no business of yours. I met you, liked your manners, and have saved you!—that is enough! say no more!”

The Englishman of course desisted, and soon after rose to take his leave. The captain, who recovered his good-humour, told him he should have an escort yet a little

further, and be put in the route he wished to follow. The merchant would then have returned the silver button, but the robber insisted on his keeping it.

“You, or some friend of yours, may have to pass this way again,” said he, “and whoever has the button to produce will be respected as you have been respected! Go with God! and say nothing as to what has happened between you and me and mine! Adios!”

The merchant’s farewell was an earnest and cordial one. Guided by the brigands, he soon reached the beaten road on the opposite side of the mountains, and would there have given them some money for the trouble he had caused them. They said they had their captain’s strict commands against this—they would not accept a real, but left him, wishing him a happy journey.

Some time, I believe some years, after this adventure, the English merchant heard, with deep regret, that the Spanish robber chief, whom he described as being one of the handsomest men he had ever beheld, had been betrayed into the hands of government, and put to a cruel and ignominious death.

SCHINDER-HANNES, JACK THE FLAYER,**OR THE ROBBER OF THE RHINE.**

This famous brigand, whose trial occupies a conspicuous place among the modern *Causes Célèbres*, was, at the beginning of the present century, the terror of the Palatinate, and of the other provinces on both sides of the Lower Rhine; and the boldness and extent of his depredations entitle him to a foremost rank in the annals of modern brigandism. We indeed look in vain for his equal in northern Europe. This man's real name was John Buckler, and he was born in 1779, at Muklen, on the right bank of the Rhine. His descent and training were good. His father, as fond of a vagrant life as he himself became, forsook his wife and family and enlisted in an Austrian regiment; soon growing tired of the army, or of the Austrians, he deserted from them, and fled to the Prussian territories, where his wife and his son John, then nine years of age, joined him. The elder Buckler obtained employment as forest keeper, and was able to send his son to school, where Master John was instructed in the Lutheran communion. He might have continued an honest lad for some time longer, but one day, when he was about sixteen years old, a publican entrusted him with a whole *louis d'or* to purchase some smuggled brandy for the house—this temptation was too

strong for the virtue of Hannes, who spent the money in a jollification with his comrades, and then, afraid of the consequences should he return home, he decamped and wandered about the country. The first thing he appropriated to himself, after the publican's *louis d'or*, was a horse, which he stole, carried off, and sold.

At this time he could hardly have entertained a proper notion of the rights and dignity of the profession to which he had made a promising enough noviciate; for the next thing he did was to go and hire himself as a servant and aide-de-camp to the public executioner at Barenbach. Hannes, however, could not conquer his love of society; he was always fond of his glass of Rhenish, and of two or three jolly fellows to drink it with. There was a butcher belonging to a neighbouring town with the same propensities, and who probably had a certain sympathy with the executioner's man, arising from a similarity of profession. The slayer of sheep and oxen, and the assistant to the slayer of men, soon became very intrinsically intimate. Hannes swore he had not known such a good fellow since the lads with whom he had spent mine host's *louis d'or*, and the butcher swore Hannes was a "prime one"—fit for any thing. This butcher himself was of a certainty fit for the gallows, for, tired of killing other people's sheep, or sheep he paid the market price for, he induced Master John to go out and steal sheep and sell them to him at Kirn—at discreet prices.

This contraband trade could not last long, pleasant and profitable as it was. Hannes was arrested and conveyed to prison, and might have furnished some employment for his master the executioner, had he not ingeniously contrived to escape from his place of confinement. Wandering afterwards in the wild regions of the Hochwald, he fell in with Finck and Black Peter, the

captains of two bands of daring outlaws, who had long been distinguished in their calling.

The circumstances of the times contributed to the formation of these predatory bands, and here, as we have shown elsewhere, the field for their excesses had been prepared by political misfortunes and vices, without which no numerous associations or freebooters can long exist.

“The wars of the French revolution had raged for years, during which time the states bordering on the Rhine were continually over-run by troops, French and German; the fields had been ravaged, the cottages pillaged and burnt, the cattle carried away, forced contributions in money and kind exacted; most of the landholders and farmers became ruined, and the poorer class of labourers and artisans were absolutely starving, and these, as a last desperate resource, began thieving—some for the mere object of supporting existence; others, animated by a principle of revenge against their armed oppressors. Of the latter sort was the notorious band of Pickard, in Belgium. The political state of the country favoured their impunity. The little German governments, ecclesiastical and secular, into which it was parcelled under the old system, had been either suppressed by the French, or were allowed to drag on a precarious existence, powerless and detached from the former imperial confederation. In one part the French laws had superseded the German, but were not yet consolidated and enforced, and the subordinate agents of justice had become remiss in their duties, from the contagious example of general disorder into which society was thrown. Mechanics of all trades, vagrants, pedlers, strolling musicians, labourers, woodmen, Jews, formed the first band of robbers that appeared on the right or German side of the Rhine, as early as the years 1793—4.” Surely such

fatal results as these ought to have weight with the ambitious wagers of war, and with such as with uncertain prospects of success would revolutionise a country. It is not the excesses of the army in the field that are alone to be feared—it is not the passions and the vices of soldiers that are alone to be provided against; but the disorder and licentiousness of a despoiled and embittered populace, that are almost as sure to follow in the train of war and revolution, as one wave of the sea rolls on the other. But a book devoted to robbers is not likely to reform conquerors, so let us return to the life of our robber of the Rhine.

The daring bands among whom he fell in the wild country of the Hochwald readily admitted Hannes as a member, and soon had reason to applaud his activity, address, and bravery. But after committing various depredations, such as stealing horses, (to which he seems to have had all a Yorkshireman's partiality), &c. he fell a second time into the hands of justice, and into a prison. His good luck and talents did not, however, desert him, and a second time (taking some of his comrades in the band, now fellow-prisoners, with him) he contrived to escape, by breaking through a wall of the prison of Sarrebruck. He must have been rather careless, or confident in his own resources; for not long after he was seized in another part of the country, and after an examination, committed to a dungeon in the strong tower of Simmerm.

This was the third time Master John was in prison, and the old proverb saith, "take care of the third time;" but he was as lucky as though it had been only his first die thrown with fortune. By means of a broken knife, he contrived to remove a board in the wall of his dungeon, whence creeping into an outward apartment, he wrenched the iron bars from the window, and leaped out from

a considerable height. He fell in his descent, and a heavy stone, which he had loosened, fell after him, and wounded him severely in one of his legs. Spite, however, of this wound, he managed to crawl along in the dark to a neighbouring forest, where he lay concealed for two whole days, without food, and without assistance.

On the third, he found his way to the snug, retired house of an old associate, where his wound was dressed, and where he received all the succour and sympathy his case demanded. He soon recovered, and showed that his hair-breadth escapes, and pains, and sufferings, had brought about no penitence. He began his career of highway robbery and general brigandism in company with numerous associates, who continued to increase under the shadow of his *prestige*, talents, and energy, and who, for these qualities, now acknowledged him, not as a simple comrade, but as their chief. The other banditti, and even the sanguinary Black Peter himself, by degrees, submitted to his authority or advice. No expedition of moment was planned and undertaken, save by the directions of the famous jail breaker, who thus became the soul of the complicate body. It was now, in the plenitude of his power, that Master John Buckler acquired the name of Schinder-hannes, or Jack the Flayer. He was young, rather handsome, clever, as we have seen, and a popular man with the fair sex, having had sundry love adventures of considerable *eclat*. But his qualities as a romantic hero were soon increased, for he fixed his affections upon a pretty girl, one Julia Blæsus, whom, in defiance of the church, it appears, he called his wife. The fair Julia, the daughter of a fiddler and hornblower of some eminence, accompanied him occasionally in his expeditions, dressed in male attire.

The audacity of Schinder-hannes's band is almost incredible, and can only be understood by reference to the

state of the country, as I have described it. The travellers on the highway did not offer sufficient booty ; they proceeded to force open houses, and to attack whole villages, carrying on at times a sort of regular fight with the inhabitants. In these operations, the captain, with one or two of his cleverest men, was always the first to enter the house, having left part of his troop to guard the approaches, and to fire upon any one who dared to come near. His introductory essay in this line was made in the year 1800, on the house of a gentleman named Riegel, who lived at Otzweiler. Schinder-hannes, with fourteen of his men, armed with firelocks, suddenly appeared one night at the house of an honest miller in the immediate neighbourhood. They came with a good appetite, and imposed on the hospitality of the miller for a good supper, which they ate, and then went to work—and, at first, in a peaceful way enough, for they knocked a rattat at Mr. Riegel's door, which was opened by that gentleman's son-in-law. Schinder-hannes and two of his men rushed in, when their behaviour became less civil. They began to ill-treat the inmates, and threatened Mrs. Riegel with death if she did not reveal where the money was concealed. But still worse followed; for while the good lady was shrieking in the hands of the robbers, her husband, trying to escape through a window, was fired at, and killed on the spot; and her son-in-law was severely wounded. The report of firearms alarmed the neighbours, who sallied out in great numbers; and then the banditti thought it prudent to retire, which they did, keeping up a running fire against their pursuers.

It is to be remarked in Schinder-hannes's depredations, that the Jews, who are numerous in that part of Germany, and often wealthy, were the principal victims of them. He, indeed, seemed to consider that people as legitimate plunder ; and strange as it may now appear in

more civilised, settled, and tolerant days, many people of the country, who were not robbers, apparently entertained the same opinion. He assailed the house of a rich Jew named Wolff, at Ottenbach, and carried off a considerable booty. At Merxheim, the *rent-meister*, or magistrate of the place, pointed out to him another Jew of the name of Boer, as a man of wealth, and as one who had rendered himself obnoxious to the people; and immediately acting on the suggestion, Schinder-hannes attacked and plundered the house with little obstacle. The robbers fell in with the watch, to whom they plainly stated they were going "to rob a Jew," upon which they were allowed to pass!

The spring and autumn were the favourite seasons for these expeditions; and Saturday nights were preferred for a curious reason. It appeared on their trial, when the robbers were finally brought to justice, that most of Schinder-hannes's *baldovers*, or spies, and some of the brigands themselves, were Jews, who, in the leisure of their sabbath-day, could more conveniently attend to the business of crime and rapine.

But still, it must be repeated, it is chiefly as sufferers that the Jews figure in Schinder-hannes's exploits. One day this bold robber, being posted in ambuscade near the high road, with only two of his followers, saw a caravan of about forty-five Jews returning from a fair at Kreuznacht. As they came near, he challenged them and ordered them to halt, which they all did at once, before three men. They turned out not worth the trouble of stopping; they had only a few kreutzers a-piece, which they had gained by trafficking at the fair. The magnanimous robbers despised so paltry a booty, and left the Jews their leathern purses. But Schinder-hannes was in a jocular mood, and he ordered them all to pull off their

shoes and stockings. In a minute every Jew among them pulled off his shoes and stockings.

Schinder-hannes then made them throw them all in a heap on one side of the road, and he and his companions, with their gun-stocks, so tossed and tumbled and mixed the shoes and stockings, that fellows so parted company, it would have been a difficult job indeed to find out a pair among them, or for any man to fit himself to his own, even if ten minutes had been allowed him.

"Now then, Jews," cried Schinder-hannes, "take you every one of you his own stockings and his own shoes, put them on, and decamp instantly. Be honest, if you can, and take no one's things but your own. I will shoot every one of you that takes another man's shoe or another man's stocking! Quick! quick! he is a dead man who is the last to be fitted to his own, and off, as sure as my name is Schinder-hannes!" And he and his followers levelled their muskets at the bare-footed Jews.

Well nigh bereft of their senses, by the dread which the threat and the name of the robber inspired, the poor Jews threw themselves altogether on the heap by the road-side, and began scrambling for their shoes and stockings, cuffing, and scratching, and abusing one another in their hurry and impatience. When Schinder-hannes had amused himself for awhile with this ludicrous spectacle, a subject worthy of Hogarth or Wilkie, he walked off with his comrades almost dying with laughter.

The mere name of the robber, whose exploits were spread far and wide, now struck terror into every breast. By a political alternation of kindness and severity, he imposed on the common people; and, by degrees, even the wealthier class, who had suffered from him, dreaded Schinder-hannes so much, that, far from daring to inform against him, they avoided even the mention of his name. Unlike the Italian banditti of the Apennines, who live in

wilds and gloomy solitudes, these robbers of the Rhine frequented the most joyous and peopled scenes. "They appeared in the open day, and in the very scenes of their robberies; they lounged in public houses, went to dances and festivals, and were generally treated with great deference. When danger was near, they separated, and each repaired to his home, in various parts of the country, until called again by the captain on some new expedition." Besides the fair Julia, many of the band had equally devoted wives, or innamoras, who were made useful to the lawless community by procuring information, selling the goods plundered, and obtaining passports to proceed from one state to another.

The robbers must have invoked many a "blessing on the Rhine"—for that noble river often bore them and their spoils to a place of safety and convenient sale. After a successful expedition on one side of the Rhine, generally the left bank, they were accustomed to cross the river, where they would remain quiet for some time, and dispose of their plunder. They changed costume and appearance according to circumstances. Schinderhannes was very happy in his disguises, and so confident, that he once for a considerable time passed himself off as a steady merchant, and even repaired to the great trading mart, Frankfort. He ran, however, his risks. In 1801, he had a narrow escape in an affray with a party of soldiers in the electorate of Mayence, with whom he engaged in a drunken brawl at a public house: on another occasion, after pillaging the house of a Jew at Bayerthat, in the Palatinate, he was so closely pressed by a party of chasseurs, that he was obliged to seek concealment in a hayloft. The soldiers visited his hiding-place, but he again miraculously escaped. But this escape was his last: he had worn out his extraordinary good luck, and the career of his crimes was now drawing near its end.

He was closely watched and tracked to his haunts; he could no longer prosecute his expeditions without imminent peril—for even the peasants were now on the alert against him. He had risen and thrived during the confusion and horrors of war, but peace had now been made between France and Austria, the provinces on the Rhine had consequently been restored to tranquillity and security, and the administration was in the hands of men of energy, who determined to extirpate the banditti.

Schinder-hannes for some time wandered from place to place, but he every day found his resources failing him, and was at last arrested on suspicion. Fortunately for him, however, nobody knew him, and when, making a virtue of necessity, he was fain to sink from the dignity of a captain of robbers to the grade of a common soldier, and addressed himself to an Austrian recruiting captain, he was readily accepted, and enlisted under an assumed name. He marched with the rest of the recruits to Limbourg, and might have marched thence to some snug mud village in Hungary, where nobody would ever have known him, and have escaped the pursuits of justice for his past misdeeds; he might have commenced a new career of crime on another and a distant theatre; or he might have reformed, and become the serjeant-major and the ornament of an Austrian regiment; but, as he was walking through the streets of Limbourg, he was accidentally met by a peasant who recognised him, and denounced him to the magistrates as the famous Schinder-hannes—the robber of the Rhine! No sooner was he denounced and produced by the officer to whom he enlisted, than the whole town flocked to see the man of whose exploits they had heard so much. Schinder-hannes had cultivated too numerous an acquaintance to hope to escape detection; he hung down his head; but he was sworn to by many who had met him on the

road in the exercise of his calling. The Austrian captain gave him up to the civil power, and Schinderhannes, after a career of unexampled audacity and success, (for this part of Europe,) which had lasted five years, was taken by a strong escort to Mayence, in May 1802. As soon as he saw himself in the hands of the French gens-d'armes, he cried "I am lost! now, indeed, it is all over with me!" On his arrival at Mayence, he was brought before the judges of the special criminal court, and to them he at once and freely gave a detailed account of his life and adventures. Such of his accomplices as were still living, were successively secured, and after eight months spent in investigations, and in receiving depositions against the robbers, in February 1803 the criminal court of Mayence declared itself competent to proceed on the trial of the accused. Omitting the doubtful or the frivolous, no less than fifty-three serious and substantiated charges were brought against Schinderhannes. His accomplices arrested were sixty-seven. Among this number figured old Buckler, the forest-keeper, Schinderhannes's father; the robber's mistress Julia Blœsus; various other women, wives, mistresses, and sisters of the banditti; several itinerant musicians, Jews, a miller, &c. The acts of instruction, deposition, and interrogation produced for this extraordinary trial, filled, when printed, five thick folio volumes.

The public trial did not commence until the 24th of October 1803. Three of the accused had died meanwhile in prison, but sixty-five were brought before the court. One hundred and thirty-two witnesses appeared for the prosecution, and no less than two hundred and two for the prisoners. The first and second days of the trial were employed in reading the act of accusation. The whole trial occupied twenty-eight days. Schinder-

hannes was firm and bold, and even gay. He entertained the hope that he should escape the capital punishment; but on the deposition of the miller's mother of Merxheim, to whose arm the robbers had applied a burning candle to extort her money from her, Schinderhannes's countenance fell; till then he had succeeded tolerably well in making himself out, a criminal indeed, but one averse to cruelty or the shedding of blood, but at that moment he said, in a sad, despondent tone, "It is all over! I hear the scream of the bird of death!"

The horrid punishment of being broken on the wheel, which had been usually awarded to culprits of his class in that country, now presented itself to his imagination. The boldest might tremble at such a fate! He asked the president whether he was so to suffer? When answered that that species of punishment had been abolished by the French law, he recovered his self-possession, and added—"If I have wished to live, it is only because I intended to become an honest man!" During the whole of the trial he constantly endeavoured to screen his father and his mistress. It appeared, however, in evidence, that Julia had accompanied him in some of his minor expeditions, especially to the house of Isaac the Jew usurer; and that his parent also had participated in some of his crimes.

After a most patient investigation, Schinderhannes was found guilty of all the charges, and with nineteen of his accomplices condemned to death. Fifteen more of the culprits, among whom was Schinderhannes's father, were sentenced to hard labour in irons, for various terms, from six to twenty-four years; two others, with one of the women, to two years imprisonment; Julia Blœsus to two years in the house of correction; and two other women to be expelled from the French territory. The rest were acquitted.

Schinder-hannes heard the sentence with much indifference, save when he evinced a lively satisfaction on hearing the lenient punishment of his mistress, and that his father's life was to be spared. He asked to speak with the president; but it was not to say one word for himself; it was only to express his hope that his father, his Julia, and his child, might be taken care of after his death.

On the morning of the 21st of November, the day fixed upon for the execution, a clergyman visited the prisoners. Schinder-hannes told him he was resigned to his fate, and respectfully requested him to bestow his spiritual care and consolation on certain of his comrades who needed them more than he did. He, however, expressed a wish to take the sacrament. When he arrived at the place of execution, he hastily climbed up the scaffold, and examined the guillotine with minute attention: he was curious to know whether its stroke was as prompt and sure as he had been given to understand it was, and put the question with an unfaltering tongue.

On being answered in the affirmative, he turned round and addressed the crowd. "I have deserved death," said he, "but ten of my companions die innocent!" meaning, probably, that these ten had never been guilty of murder—the only crime, in his idea, that merited death. He then laid his head on the block, and found the transition from this world to the dread unknown, quite as rapid as the executioners told him it would be through the agency of their apparatus. The subalterns followed their captain, and the execution of the twenty culprits occupied only twenty-six minutes, making one minute eighteen seconds for each man!

The destruction of this daring band cleared the Rhine of robbers; but the inhabitants on the banks of that beautiful river will long retain the traditions of Schinder-hannes.

HUNGARIAN ROBBERS.

This story was told me by an Italian officer, who was serving, at the time he first learned it, with the "Grande Armée" of Napoleon. It seems to me to contain one of the most striking, most dramatic, and terrible scenes that can be conceived, and I have only to regret that I lack the talent or power of telling the tale of horror so well as it was told to me.

It was a few weeks before the termination of the short, but (for Austria) fatal campaign of 1809—that campaign which, begun nobly by the Austrians, ended in their seeing Bonaparte dictate to their prostrate empire from their capital, and shortly after claim as his bride the daughter of the sovereign he had so injured and humbled—that an Hungarian horse-dealer left Vienna to return to his home, which was situated in an interior province of his country.

He carried with him, in paper money and in gold, a very considerable sum, the product of the horses he had sold at the Austrian capital. To carry this in safety was a difficult object just at that time; for troops, French and Austrian, were scattered in every direction, and he knew by experience, that it was not always safe to fall in with small parties of soldiers, even of his own country or government, (to say nothing of the French,)

but that Croates, and wild Hussars, and Hulans, and others that fought under the Austrian eagle, were seldom over scrupulous as to "keeping their hands from picking and stealing," when opportunity was favourable or tempting.

The dealer, however, relied on his minute knowledge of the country he had traversed so often; on the bottom and speed of his thorough bred Hungarian horse;—and having obtained what he considered good information, as to the posts occupied by the belligerents, and the range of country most exposed to the soldiery, he set out from Vienna, which he feared would soon be in the hands of the enemy. He went alone, and on his road carefully avoided, instead of seeking the company of other travellers, for he reasonably judged, that a solitary individual, meanly dressed as he was, might escape notice, while a party of travellers would be sure to attract it.

By his good management he passed the Hungarian frontier unharmed, and continued his journey homeward by a circuitous unfrequented route. On the third night after his departure from Vienna, he stopped at a quiet inn, situated in the suburbs of a small town. He had never been there before, but the house was comfortable, and the appearance of the people about it respectable. Having first attended to his tired horse, he sat down to supper with his host and family. During the meal, he was asked whence he came, and when he said from Vienna, all present were anxious to know the news. The dealer told them all he knew. The host then enquired what business had carried him to Vienna. He told them he had been there to sell some of the best horses that were ever taken to that market. When he heard this, the host cast a glance at one of the men of the family, who seemed to be his son, which the dealer

scarcely observed then, but which he had reason to recall afterwards.

When supper was finished, the fatigued traveller requested to be shown to his bed. The host himself took up a light, and conducted him across a little yard at the back of the house to a detached building, which contained two rooms, tolerably decent for an Hungarian hostel. In the inner of these rooms was a bed, and here the host left him to himself. As the dealer threw off his jacket and loosened the girdle round his waist where his money was deposited, he thought he might as well see whether it was all safe. Accordingly, he drew out an old leathern purse that contained his gold, and then a tattered parchment pocket-book that enveloped the Austrian bank notes, and finding that both were quite right, he laid them under the bolster, extinguished the light, and threw himself on the bed, thanking God and the saints that had carried him thus far homeward in safety. He had no misgiving as to the character of the people he had fallen amongst to hinder his repose, and the poor dealer was very soon enjoying a profound and happy sleep.

He might have been in this state of beatitude an hour or two, when he was disturbed by a noise like that of an opening window, and by a sudden rush of cool night air; on raising himself on the bed, he saw peering through an open window which was almost immediately above the bed, the head and shoulders of a man, who was evidently attempting to make his ingress into the room that way. As the terrified dealer looked, the intruding figure was withdrawn, and he heard a rumbling noise, and then the voices of several men, as he thought, close under the window. The most dreadful apprehensions, the more horrible as they were so sudden, now agitated the traveller, who, scarcely knowing what he

did, but utterly despairing of preserving his life, threw himself under the bed. He had scarcely done so, when the hard breathing of a man was heard at the open window, and the next moment a robust fellow dropped into the room, and after staggering across it, groped his way by the walls to the bed. Fear had almost deprived the horse-dealer of his senses, but yet he perceived that the intruder, whoever he might be, was drunk. There was, however, slight comfort in this, for he might only have swallowed wine to make him the more desperate, and the traveller was convinced he had heard the voices of other men without, who might climb into the room to assist their brother villain in case any resistance should be made. His astonishment, however, was great and reviving, when he heard the fellow throw off his jacket on the floor, and then toss himself upon the bed under which he lay. Terror, however, had taken too firm a hold of the traveller to be shaken off at once,—his ideas were too confused to permit his imagining any other motive for such a midnight intrusion on an unarmed man with property about him, save that of robbery and assassination, and he lay quiet where he was until he heard the fellow above him snoring with all the sonorousness of a drunkard. Then, indeed, he would have left his hiding place, and gone to rouse the people in the inn to get another resting place instead of the bed of which he had been dispossessed in so singular a manner, but, just as he came to this resolution, he heard the door of the outer room open—then stealthy steps cross it—then the door of the very room he was in was softly opened, and two men, one of whom was the host and the other his son, appeared on its threshold,

“Leave the light where it is,” whispered the host, “or it may disturb him and give us trouble.”

“There is no fear of that,” said the younger man,

also in a whisper, "we are two to one; he has nothing but a little knife about him—he is dead asleep too! hear how he snores!"

"Do my bidding," said the old man, sternly; "would you have him wake and rouse the neighbourhood with his screams?"

As it was, the horror-stricken dealer under the bed could scarcely suppress a shriek, but he saw that the son left the light in the outer room, and then, pulling the door partially after them to screen the rays of the lamp from the bed, he saw the two murderers glide to the bed side, and then heard a rustling motion as of arms descending on the bed clothes, and a hissing, and then a grating sound, that turned his soul sick, for he knew it came from knives or daggers penetrating to the heart or vitals of a human being like himself, and only a few inches above his own body. This was followed by one sudden and violent start on the bed, accompanied by a moan. Then the bed, which was a low one, was bent by an increase of weight caused by one or both the murderers throwing themselves upon it, until it pressed on the body of the traveller. There was an awful silence for a moment or two, and then the host said, "He is finished—I have cut him across the throat—take the money, I saw him put it under his bolster."

"I have it, here it is," said the son; "a purse and a pocket-book."

The traveller was then relieved from the weight that had oppressed him almost to suffocation, and the assassins, who seemed to tremble as they went, ran out of the room, took up the light, and disappeared altogether from the apartment.

No sooner were they fairly gone, than the poor dealer crawled from under the bed, took one desperate leap, and escaped through the little window by which he had

seen enter the unfortunate wretch who had evidently been murdered in his stead. He ran with all his speed to the town, where he told his horrid story and miraculous escape to the night watch. The night watch conducted him to the burgomaster, who was soon aroused from his sleep and acquainted with all that had happened.

In less than half an hour from the time of his escape from it, the horse-dealer was again at the murderous inn, with the magistrate and a strong force of the horror-stricken inhabitants and the night watch, who had all run thither in the greatest silence. In the house all seemed as still as death, but as the party went round to the stables, they heard a noise; cautioning the rest to surround the inn and the outhouses, the magistrate with the traveller and some half dozen armed men ran to the stable door—this they opened, and found within the host and his son digging a grave.

The first figure that met the eyes of the murderers was that of the traveller. The effect of this on their guilty souls was too much to be borne; they shrieked and threw themselves on the ground, and though they were immediately seized by hard griping hands of real flesh and blood, and heard the voices of the magistrates and their friends and neighbours, denouncing them as murderers, it was some minutes ere they could believe that the figure of the traveller that stood among them was other than a spirit. It was the hardier villain, the father, who, on hearing the stranger's voice continuing in conversation with the magistrate, first gained sufficient command over himself to raise his face from the earth; he saw the stranger still pale and haggard, but evidently unhurt. The murderer's head spun round confusedly, but at length rising, he said to those who held him, "Let me see that stranger nearer; let me

touch him—only let me touch him !” The poor horse-dealer drew back in horror and disgust.

“ You may satisfy him in this,” said the magistrate, “ he is unarmed and unnerved, and we are here to prevent his doing you harm.”

On this, the traveller let the host approach him, and pass his hand over his person, which when he had done, the villain exclaimed, “ I am no murderer ! who says I am a murderer ?”

“ That shall we see anon,” said the traveller, who led the way to the detached apartment, followed by the magistrate, by the two prisoners, and all the party which had collected in the stable on hearing what passed there.

Both father and son walked with considerable confidence into the room, but when they saw by the lamps the night watch and others held over it, that there was a body covered with blood, lying upon the bed, they cried out “ How is this ? who is this ?” and rushed together to the bed side. The lights were lowered ; their rays fell full upon the ghastly face and bleeding throat of a young man. At the sight, the younger of the murderers turned his head and swooned in silence ; but the father, uttering a shriek so loud, so awful, that one of the eternally damned alone might equal its effect, threw himself on the bed and on the gashed and bloody body, and murmuring in his throat, “ My son ! I have killed mine own son !” also found a temporary relief from the horrors of his situation in insensibility. The next minute the wretched hostess, who was innocent of all that had passed, and who was, without knowing it, the wife of a murderer, the mother of a murderer, and the mother of a murdered son—of a son killed by a brother and a father, ran to the apartment, and would have increased tenfold its already insupportable horrors by en-

tering there, had she not been prevented by the honest townspeople. She had been roused from sleep by the noise made in the stable, and then by her husband's shriek, and was now herself, shrieking and frantic, carried back into the inn by main force.

The two murderers were forthwith bound and carried to the town jail, where, on the examination, which was made the next morning, it appeared from evidence that the person murdered was the youngest son of the landlord of the inn, and a person never suspected of any crime more serious than habitual drunkenness; that instead of being in bed, as his father and brother had believed him, he had stolen out of the house, and joined a party of carousers in the town: of these boon companions, all appeared in evidence, and two of them deposed that the deceased, being exceedingly intoxicated, and dreading his father's wrath, should he rouse the house in such a state, and at that late hour, had said to them that he would get through the window into the little detached apartment, and sleep there, as he had often done before, and that they two had accompanied him, and assisted him to climb to the window. The deceased had reached the window once, and as they thought would have got safe through it, but drunk and unsteady as he was, he slipped back; they had then some difficulty in inducing him to climb again, for in the caprice of intoxication, he said he would rather go sleep with one of his comrades. However, he had at last effected his entrance, and they, his two comrades, had gone to their respective homes.

The wretched criminals were executed a few weeks after the commission of the crime. They had confessed every thing, and restored to the horse-dealer the gold and the paper money they had concealed, and which had led them to do a deed so much more atrocious than even they had contemplated.

THE HIGHLANDERS OF INDIA,

OR THE ROHILLA ROBBERS.

The following account, which is from the pen of the lamented Bishop Heber, is replete with interest, and offers one passage, than which nothing can be well more impressive and dramatic. It is, moreover, strictly confirmatory of what has been already several times advanced: that, as justice and mildness of government wean men from rapine and crime, so do tyranny and oppression drive men to them; and when, under the latter circumstances, the nature of the country is favourable, abounding in forests and mountain recesses, and touching on the confines of another state, an extensive system of brigandage will almost invariably result.

“The conquest of Rohilcund by the English, and the death of its chief in battle, its consequent cession to the Nawab of Oude, and the horrible manner in which Sujah ud Dowlah oppressed and misgoverned it, form one of the worst chapters of the English history in India. We have since made the Rohillas some amends by taking them away from Oude, and governing them ourselves; but, by all I could learn, the people appear by no means to have forgotten or forgiven their first injuries.”

Their insubordination and violence are favoured by the nature of the locality just alluded to—their province

is in the immediate neighbourhood of Oude, and a vast forest exists along the whole of their eastern, southern and northern frontiers.

“ In this forest a great Rohilla robber, or rebel chief, is by many supposed to have lurked the last seven years, for whose apprehension government have vainly offered no less a sum than 10,000 rupees. Many robberies are, certainly, still perpetrated in his name; but the opinion of the magistrates at Shahjehanpoor is, that the man is really dead, and that his name only, like that of Captain Rock, remains as the rallying point of mutiny. The military officers of our dinner party had often been in this forest, which they describe as extensive, and in some places very picturesque, with some few tracts of high land, whence, even in this neighbourhood, the snowy range of Himalaya is visible.

“ The Rohilla insurgents are usually very faithful to each other, and, as in Oude there is neither police nor pursuit, it very seldom happens, if they once escape, that they can be laid hold of afterwards. One of the most notorious of them, who had long eluded justice, came into the hands of government not long since, under very singular circumstances. He had passed over into Oude, and bought a zemindarrie there, which was last year seized on, under circumstances of excessive injustice, by the servants of the king's favourite, who, at the same time, carried off one of his wives. The zemindar, equally high spirited and desperate, rode immediately to Lucknow, scaled, by the assistance of his servants, the wall of the minister's private garden, and waited there well-armed, but alone, till his enemy should make his appearance. The minister did not himself appear, but his two youngest sons came out to walk with their ayahs.* The Rohilla knew them, pounced on them like a tiger, and holding

* Nurses or governesses.

them between his knees, told the terrified women to go and call their master. The palace was soon in an uproar, but he sat still, with his back against the wall, the infants under his knees, and a pistol in each hand, calling out, 'Draw near and they are both dead.' The minister wept and tore his flesh, promising him every thing if he would let them go; to which he answered, 'The restoration of my wife, my own safety, and the guarantee of the British resident for both!' The Rohilla's woman was immediately brought out, and the minister ran like one frantic to the English residency, begging, for God's sake, either Mr. Rickets or Major Raper to go with him. The latter went, and the Rohilla, after a horrible pause, in which he seemed still to be weighing the sweetness of revenge against the promises held out to him, rose, took his wife by the hand, and led her away. He was not, however, satisfied with the security of his continuance in Oude, but soon after surrendered himself to the British, saying that he must look forward to a confinement of some time, but he preferred their severities to the tender mercies of the minister, who, in spite of his promises, had, he was convinced, already laid snares for him. He is now a prisoner in the castle of Allahabad, but it is generally believed that he has made his peace, and that his confinement will not be a long one, though his offences before were serious enough."

Our sepoy's that are scattered in strong detachments up and down this lawless district, have, generally, plenty of work on their hands, what with the wilfulness of the Rohillas in refusing to attend to the decrees or decisions of government, in matters of disputed property, and "an inveterate habit of 'lifting' cows and sheep, which the beggarly zemindars and idle long-legged 'gillies' of one village are apt to feel a pride in exercising against those of the next."

The Rohillas seem particularly addicted to horse stealing, and to long-tailed horses. "Take care of that long-tailed horse of yours!" was the first caution the bishop received. "Keep him carefully at night, under the sentry's eye, or you will never carry him over the ferry of Anopshehr!" The second horse of the amiable prelate being a short-tailed one, was supposed to be safe.

MEWATTIES—BHEELS—BAUGRIES—MOGHIES
—GWARRIAHS—THUGS.

Central India was devastated by associations of wretches who for the most part subsisted entirely on plunder. Some of them seem to have struck their baneful roots in the country long ago, others to have arisen under the Muhratta system, and the times of revolution and trouble, which would naturally tend to give strength to the old and birth to the new—and facilities to the execrable operations of all. Sir John Malcolm has described, in a striking manner, the desolation which ensued from letting loose a population composed of such iniquitous materials. Only those who resided in walled towns were safe from the ravages and massacres of the banditti. The state of the unprotected parts of the country near the Vindya mountains' and the river Nerbudda, where hundreds of villages were seen deserted and roofless, is described by Captain Ambrose, one of Sir John Malcolm's officers: in the year 1818, he

ascertained the names, and the names of the villages they belonged to, of eighty-four individuals who had been killed by tigers; these ferocious animals have literally usurped the country, and fought with the returning inhabitants for their fields. Authentic documents also testify that in the state of Holkar, in 1817, sixteen hundred and sixty-three villages were deserted, or, as the natives emphatically term it—"without a lamp," a phrase that denotes the extreme of desolation. All this ruin had been affected by the banditti of Central India.

To proceed with these robbers, the Mewatties are, or were an ambiguous race, half Mahometan, half Hindoo, who were not only robbers and assassins, but, according to Sir John Malcolm, the most desperate rogues in India. It is delightful to learn from Bishop Heber, that they were in a great measure reclaimed, even when he travelled through the scenes of their crimes, which he did with perfect safety; and to contrast this with the former state of the country, when it was as dangerous as the interior of Arabia is at this moment, and when merchants were obliged to travel in caravans, and to pay high rates for protection to every paltry plundering Raja. "This neighbourhood," says the bishop, speaking of part of the province of Delhi, "is still but badly cultivated; but fifteen years ago it was as wild as the Terrai, as full of tigers, and with no human inhabitants but banditti. Cattle stealing still prevails to a considerable extent, but the Mewatties are now most of them subject either to the British government or that of Bhurtpoor, and the security of life and property afforded them by the former, has induced many of the tribes to abandon their fortresses, to seat themselves in the plain, and cultivate the ground like honest men and good subjects."

The Bheels who inhabit the wild and mountainous tracts which separate Malwa from Nemaour and Guzerat,

are a totally distinct race, insulated in their abodes, and separated by their habits, usages and forms of worship, from all other tribes of India. According to Bishop Heber, they were unquestionably the original inhabitants of Rajpootana, and driven to their fastnesses and desperate and miserable way of life by the invasion of those tribes, wherever they may have come from, who profess the religion of Brahma. "This the Rajpoots themselves virtually allow, by admitting in their traditional history, that most of their principal cities and fortresses were founded by such or such Bheel chiefs, and conquered from them by the children of the sun."

Here we have again, as it were, the Gael retreating from the Sassenach, and indemnifying and avenging himself by foray, blood, and plunder.

Thieves and savages as they were, the British officers who conversed with Bishop Heber, thought them on the whole a better race than their conquerors. Their word is said to be more to be depended on : they are of a franker and livelier character ; their women are far better treated and enjoy more influence ; and though they shed blood without scruple in cases of feud, or in the regular way of a foray, they are not vindictive or inhospitable under other circumstances ; and several British officers have, with perfect safety, gone hunting and fishing in their country, without escort or guide, except what these poor savages themselves cheerfully furnished for a little brandy.

"In a Sanscrit vocabulary, seven hundred or more years old, the term Bheel denotes a particular race of barbarians living on plunder ; and the Mahabharat, an ancient Hindoo poem, gives the same description of them. At all times formidable, they became the general terror of Central India under the guidance of Nadir Sing. This chief committed a murder, or rather caused it to be com-

mitted. The English had now the power of administering justice, and the following instance, which occurred on the trial of Nadir Sing, is strongly characteristic of the Bheel race.

“ During the examination into the guilt of Nadir, when taking the evidence of some female prisoners, it appeared that the father and husband of one of them, a girl about fourteen years of age, had been instruments in committing the murder of which Nadir was accused. She was asked if they put the deceased to death ; ‘ Certainly they did,’ was her firm reply ; ‘ but they acted by our Dhunnee’s (or lord’s) order.

“ ‘ That may be true,’ it was remarked, ‘ but it does not clear them ; for it was not an affray ; it was a deed perpetrated in cold blood.’

“ ‘ Still,’ said the girl, ‘ they had the chief’s order !’

“ The person* conducting the examination shook his head, implying it would not be received in justification. The child, for she was hardly more, rose from the ground where she was sitting, and, pointing to two sentries who guarded them, and were standing at the door of the room, exclaimed, with all the animation of strong feeling, ‘ These are your soldiers ; you are their Dhunnee ; your words are their laws ; if you order them this moment to advance, and put me, my mother, and cousin, who are now before you, to death, would they hesitate in slaying three female Bheels ? If we are innocent, would you be guilty of our blood, or these faithful men ?’ After this observation she re-seated herself, saying, ‘ My father and husband are Nadir’s soldiers.’ ”

The chiefs of the Bheels, indeed, who were usually called *Bhomeahs*, exercised the most absolute power, and their orders to commit the most atrocious crimes were

* Sir John Malcolm himself. He was assisted on the trial by Captain D. Stuart, who noted down the girl’s expression.

obeyed, (as among the sectaries of the old man of the mountain,) by their ignorant but attached subjects, without a conception, on their part, that they had an option. But Nadir Sing was banished for the murder alluded to; his son, who had been carefully educated at Sir John Malcolm's head-quarters, succeeded to his authority, and there is now no part of the country where life and property are safer than amid the late dreaded Bheels of his father.

The Bheels excite the horror of the higher classes of Hindoos, by eating, not only the flesh of buffaloes, but of cows; an abomination which places them just above the *Chumars*, or shoemakers, who feast on dead carcasses, and are not allowed to dwell within the precincts of the village. The wild Bheels, who keep among the hills, are a diminutive and wretched-looking race, but active, and capable of great fatigue; they go armed with bows and arrows, and are still professed robbers and thieves, lying in wait for the weak and unprotected, while they fly from the strong. Their excesses, however, are now chiefly indulged in against the Hindoos. "A few months since," says Bishop Heber, "one of the bazars of Nee-much was attacked and plundered by a body of the 'hill people;' and there are, doubtless, even in the plains, many who still sigh after their late anarchy, and exclaim amid the comforts of a peaceable government,

'Give us our wildness and our woods,
Our huts and caves again!'

"The son of Mr. Palmer, chaplain of Nusseerabad, while travelling lately with his father and mother in their way from Mhow, observed some Bheels looking earnestly at a large drove of laden bullocks which were drinking in a ford. He asked one of the Bheels if the bullocks belonged to him. 'No!' was the reply, 'but a good part

of them would have been ours, if it were not for you English, who will let nobody thrive but yourselves."

On first approaching the Bheel villages, the bishop observed a man run from the nearest hut to the top of a hill, and give a shrill shout or scream, which he heard repeated from the furthest hamlet in sight, and again from two others, which the bishop could not see. "I asked the meaning of this," he continues, "and my guards informed me that these were their signals to give the alarm of our coming, our numbers, and that we had horse with us. By this means they knew at once whether it was advisable to attack us, to fly, or to remain quiet, while, if there were any of their number who had particular reasons for avoiding an interview with the troops and magistrates of the low lands, they had thus fair warning given them to keep out of the way. This sounds like a description of Rob Roy's country, but these poor Bheels are far less formidable enemies than the old Mac Gregors."

This ancient people are very expert in the use of the bow, and have a curious way of shooting from the long grass, where they lie concealed, holding the bow with their feet. Besides against their prey, quadruped, biped, and winged, the Bheels use the bow and arrow against fish, which they kill in the rivers and pools with great certainty and rapidity. Their bows are of split bamboo, simple, but strong and elastic. The arrows are also of bamboo, with an iron head coarsely made, and a long single barb. Those intended for striking fish, have this head so contrived as to slip off from the shaft when the fish is struck, but to remain connected with it by a long line, on the principle of the harpoon. The shaft, in consequence, remains floating in the water, and not only contributes to weary out the animal, but shows its pursuer which way he flees, and thus enables him to seize it.

They have many curious customs, that date from very remote antiquity. One of them was witnessed by Bishop Heber, and described in his usual felicitous manner.

“A number of Bheels, men and women, came to our camp, (near Jhalloda,) with bamboos in their hands, and the women with their clothes so scanty, and tucked up so high, as to leave the whole limb nearly bare. They had a drum, a horn, and some other rude minstrelsy, and said they were come to celebrate the *hoolee*. They drew up in two parties, one men, one women, and had a mock fight, in which at first the females had much the advantage, having very slender poles, while the men had only short cudgels, with which they had some difficulty in guarding their heads. At last some of the women began to strike a little too hard, on which their antagonists lost temper, and closed with them so fiercely, that the poor females were put to the rout, in real or pretended terror. They collected a little money in the camp, and then went on to another village. The *Hoolee*, according to the orthodox system, was over, but these games are often prolonged for several days after its conclusion.”

As bishop Heber advanced in the country infested by the Bheels, he met caravans of Brinjarrees, or carriers of grain, (a singular wandering race,*) escorted by Bheels,

* The Brinjarrees pass their whole lives in carrying grain from one part of the country to the other, seldom on their own account, but as agents for others. They travel in large bodies with their wives, children, dogs, and loaded bullocks. The men are all armed as a protection against petty thieves. From the sovereigns and armies of Hindostan, they have nothing to apprehend. Their calling is almost considered as sacred. Even contending armies allow them to pass and repass safely; never taking their goods without purchase, or even preventing them, if they choose, from victualling their enemy's camp: both sides wisely agreeing to respect and encourage a branch of industry, the interruption of which, might be attended with fatal consequences to both. The punctuality of these corn carriers is marvellous.

paid by the carriers for the purpose. They proceeded by day with an advanced and rear-guard of these naked bowmen, and at night for security against the robbers, the honest Brinjarrees drew their corn wagons into a circle, placing their cattle in the centre, and connecting each ox with his yoke-fellow, and at length to the wain, by iron collars riveted round their necks, and fastened to an iron chain, which last is locked to the cart-wheel. It is thus extremely difficult to plunder without awaking them; and in places of greater danger, one of the Brinjarrees always stands sentry. Still farther on, descending from the hills to the lowlands, the bishop had himself one of these poor Bheels for a guide, who, as he trotted along the rugged road before his horse's head, with a shield and a neatly-made hatchet, and with a blanket of red baize flung over his shoulder, reminded him strongly of the pictures of a North American Indian. The dashing appearance of this man was owing to his being in the company's pay, as a policeman; but the Bheels here were generally in much better plight, and less given to robbing than in the hilly country.

After this, a strong escort of Bheels was added to the bishop's retinue. They not only led him safely through a perilous country, abounding with ravines, and broken land overgrown with brush-wood, (the most favourable of places for the spring of a tiger, or the arrows of an ambushed band of robbers, where recently passengers had been plundered by Bheels, and a man carried off by a tiger from a numerous convoy of artillery, on its march to Kairah,) but they conducted him across the rapid stream of the Mhye, and on his arrival at Wasnud, acted as watchmen to his camp, where their shrill calls from one to the other were heard all night.

"We were told," says the bishop, "not to be surprised at this choice, since these poor thieves are, when trusted,

the trustiest of men, and of all sentries the most wakeful and indefatigable. They and the Kholees, a race almost equally wild, are uniformly preferred in Guzerat for the service of the police, and as durwans to gentlemen's houses and gardens."

When Sir John Malcolm began the work of reformation, the very first step he took was to raise a small corps of Bheels, commanded by their own chiefs, and "before," says he, "these robbers had been in the service one month, I placed them as a guard over treasure; which had a surprising effect, both in elevating them in their own minds, and in those of other parts of the community." Nor did the judicious reformer stop here; he took as his constant attendants some of the most desperate of the plundering chiefs; and the good effects fully answered the expectations which he had formed, by thus inspiring confidence, and exalting bold and courageous men in their own estimation.

We have only to add in honour of this ancient robber race, that the fair sex have great influence in the society, and that in the recent reform, their women acted a prominent part, and one worthy of the feelings and character of their sex.

The very interesting work of Mr. Charles Coleman, (*The Mythology of the Hindoos, with notices of various mountain and island tribes, &c.*) recently published, affords the following additional anecdotes relative to the Bheels previous to their reformation.

"An English officer, a Captain B——— had, by interrupting and wounding a Bheel, while labouring in his vocation (of robbery), been marked out for vengeance. In consequence of this he had a sentry to his house; but from the neighbouring bank of the river they had worked a subterraneous passage for a considerable distance, large enough for one man to crawl along, who had begun

to perforate the floor of his bedchamber when he was discovered. We had at the city where this took place nearly two thousand troops, yet it was necessary, for the officer's safety, to remove him to Bombay. A Parsee messman, who had refused to pay the usual tribute to the Bheels, was found dead in the morning in the mess-room. It was his custom to put his mat on a large wine chest where he slept: in the morning he was found with his head placed on the messtable, the headless body lying on the ~~st.~~ ^{st.}

An encampment of English, surrounded by two hundred sentries, was robbed by this people:—

“When the morning broke forth, every officer had been robbed, save one, and he had a priest (Bhaut) and a Bheel guard. Nor did the poor *siphauees* escape; for when they gave the alarm of ‘thief! thief!’ they were sure to get a blow or wound in the leg or thigh, from a Bheel lying on the ground, or moving about on all-fours, wrapped in a bullock’s hide or a sheepskin, or carrying a bush before or over him, so that the sentries were deceived; and if they fired, they were as likely to hit some of the women or children, or the followers, or the officers, as the Bheel himself; and had they fired, the Bheel, in the dark, thus placed in a populous camp, had every advantage, his weapon making no noise, and his companions being ready to shoot the *siphauee* through the head.

“Most of the officers were up during the night, but their presence was useless. Lieutenant B—— did lay hands on a Bheel, but he literally slipped through his fingers, being naked, his body oiled all over, and his head shaved; and on giving the alarm, one or two arrows were seen to have gone through the cloths of the tent. Were it possible to retain a hold of a Bheel, your motions must be as quick as lightning; for they carry the blade of a knife, which is fastened round the neck by a

string, and with which, if they find themselves in a dilemma, they will rip up the person holding them."

Captain Mundy, in his very spirited "Pen and Pencil Sketches in India," relates this personal adventure.

"I retired to my tent this evening pretty well knocked up; and during the night had an adventure, which might have terminated with more loss to myself, had I slept sounder. My bed, a low charpoy, or 'four feet,' was in one corner of the tent, close to a door, and I awoke several times from a feverish doze, fancying I heard something moving in my tent; but could not discover any thing, though a chearing, or little Indian lamp, was burning on the table. I therefore again wooed the balmy power, and slept. At length, just as 'the iron tongue of midnight had told twelve' (for I had looked at my watch five minutes before, and replaced it under my pillow,) I was awakened by a rustling sound under my head; and, half opening my eyes, without changing my position, I saw a hideous black face within a foot of mine, and the owner of this index of a cut-throat, or, at least, cut-purse disposition, kneeling on the carpet, with one hand under my pillow, and the other grasping—not a dagger!—but the door-post. Still without moving my body, and with half closed eyes, I gently stole my right hand to a boar-spear, which at night was always placed between my bed and the wall; and as soon as I had clutched it, made a rapid and violent movement, in order to wrench it from its place, and try the virtue of its point upon the intruder's body, but I wrenched in vain. Fortunately for the robber, my bearer, in placing the weapon in its usual recess, had forced the point into the top of the tent and the butt into the ground so firmly, that I failed to extract it at the first effort; and my visiter, alarmed by the movement, started upon his feet and rushed through the door. I had time to see that he was perfectly naked,

with the exception of a black blanket twisted round his loins, and that he had already stowed away in his cloth my candlesticks and my dressing case, which latter contained letters, keys, money, and other valuables. I had also leisure, in that brief space, to judge, from the size of the arm extended to my bed, that the bearer was more formed for activity than strength; and, by his grizzled beard, that he was rather old than young. I therefore sprang from my bed, and darting through the purdar of the inner door, seized him by the cummerbund just as he was passing the outer entrance.* The cloth, however, being loose, gave way, and ere I could confirm my grasp, he snatched it from my hand, tearing away my thumb nail down to the quick. In his anxiety to escape, he stumbled through the outer purdar, and the much esteemed dressing case fell out of his loosened zone. I was so close at his heels, that he could not recover it; and jumping over the tent ropes—which, doubtless, the rogue calculated would trip me up—he ran towards the road. I was in such a fury, that, forgetting my bare feet, I gave chase, vociferating lustily, ‘Choor! choor!’ (thief! thief!) but was soon brought up by some sharp stones, just in time to see my rascal, by the faint light of the moon through the thick foliage overhead, jump upon a horse standing unheld near the road, and dash down the path at full speed, his black blanket flying in the wind. What would I have given for my double barrelled joe at that moment! As he and his steed went clattering along the rocky forest road, I thought of the black huntsman of the Hartz, or the erl king! Returning to my tent, I solaced myself by abusing my servants, who were

* The tents in India have double flies; the outer khanaut, or wall, forming a verandah, of some four feet wide, round the interior pavilion.

just rubbing their eyes and stirring themselves, and by threatening the terrified sepoy sentry with a court martial. My trunks at night were always placed outside the tent, under the sentry's eye; the robber, therefore, must have made his entry on the opposite side, and he must have been an adept in his vocation, as four or five servants were sleeping between the khanauts. The poor devil did not get much booty for his trouble, having only secured a razor, a pot of pomatum, (which will serve to lubricate his person for his next exploit,) and the candlesticks, which on closer inspection will prove to him the truth of the axiom, that 'all is not gold that glitters,' nor even silver. * * * The next morning, on relating my adventure, I was told that I was fortunate in having escaped cold steel; and many comfortable instances were recited, of the robbed being stabbed in attempting to secure the robber."

Of the other professed robbers and thieves in Central India, the two principal are the Baugries and Moghies, both Hindoos of the lowest caste: their redeeming qualities are bravery and expertness; they are "true to their salt," or to those who feed them, beyond most of the Hindoos; and so literally do they adopt the proverb, that they avoid tasting salt from the hands of any but their own brethren, that they may not be fettered in their darling pursuit of plunder. The Gwarriaahs are a tribe who support themselves by stealing women and children, whom they sell as slaves; but this abominable practice has nearly been abolished wherever British influence extends. The Thugs are the last, and worst of all. They are bands of mendicants, self-called pilgrims, pilferers, robbers, and cowardly, treacherous murderers, chiefly Brahmins, but composed of all classes, even of Mahometans. They assume all sorts of disguises; sometimes seeking protection from travellers, at others offering it;

in either case the fate of those who trust them is the same.

“The Thugs,” says Sir John Malcolm,* “carry concealed a long silken cord with a noose, which they throw round the necks of their heedless companions, who are strangled and plundered. Their victims, who are always selected for having property, are, when numerous or at all on their guard, lulled by every art into confidence. They are invited to feasts, where their victuals and drink are mixed with soporific or poisonous drugs, through the effects of which they fall an easy prey to these murderers and robbers, the extraordinary success of whose atrocities can only be accounted for by the condition of the countries in which they take place.”

The name of these monsters—Thug, *quasi* Tug, in English, would not be altogether inapplicable, as regards a principal part of their performance. “They watch their opportunity,” says Bishop Heber, “to fling a rope with a slip-knot over the heads of their victims, and then they drag them from their horses and strangle them: and so nimbly and with such fatal aim are they said to do this, that they seldom miss, and leave no time to the traveller to draw a sword, or use a gun, or in any way defend or disentangle himself. The wretches who practise this are very numerous in Guzerat and Malwa, but when they occur in Hindostan, are generally from the southeastern provinces.”

At an immeasurable distance from these nations of robbers—these hosts of hereditary banditti in India, and more like our casual, lawless associations in Europe, are the Decoits, who particularly infest the neighbourhood of Calcutta, robbing on the river in boats, or plundering on shore. Their gang-robbery is said very nearly to resemble

* Memoir of Central India, vol. ii. p. 189.

that of the Riband-men of Ireland, but unmixed with any political feeling. Five or ten peasants will meet together as soon as it is dark, to attack some neighbour's house, and not only plunder, but torture him, his wife, and children, with horrible cruelty, to make him discover his money. In the daytime these marauders follow peaceable professions, and some of them are thriving men, while the whole firm is often under the protection of a Zemindar, (a landholder, or lord of the manor,) who shares the booty, and does his best to bring off any of the gang who may fall into the hands of justice, by suborning witnesses to prove an alibi, bribing the inferior agents of police, or intimidating the witnesses for the prosecution. Thus, many men suspected of these practices, contrive to live on, from year to year, in tolerably good esteem with their neighbours, and completely beyond the reach of a government which requires proof ere it will punish. The evil is supposed to have increased since the number of spirit shops has spread so rapidly in Calcutta. These fountains of mischief are thronged both by the Hindoo and Mussulman population, especially at night; and thus drunkenness on ardent spirits, and the fierce and hateful passions they engender, lead naturally to those results which night favours, at the same time that the drinking shops furnish convenient places of meeting for all men who may be banded for an illicit purpose.

AFGHAN ROBBERS.

The mountain tribes of the Afghan race who dwell in Caubul, between India and Persia, are nearly all robbers; but like the Arabs, unite pillage with pastoral or other pursuits, and commit their depredations almost exclusively on the strangers that travel through their countries. Although I am not in possession of any striking stories of their actions, there are two or three of these tribes that may claim attention from their peculiarities.

There is, for example, that of the Jadrauns, a race of goat-herds, who wander continually with their goats through the thick pine forests that cover their mountains, and are in appearance and habits of life more like mountain bears than men. They are not numerous; their wild country is never explored by travellers, and they are never by any chance met with out of their own hills. They are sometimes at war with their neighbours, and always on the look-out for travellers on the road from Caubul through Bungush, near the pass of Peiwaur, whom they invariably plunder.

More important than these bear-like robbers, are the Vizeerees, a powerful tribe, occupying an extensive country among the mountains, which are also here covered by pine forests, but contain some few cleared and cultivated spots. Their habits are almost as retiring as those of their neighbours, the Jadrauns, and Mr. Elphinstone

found it impossible to meet with a Vizeeree out of his own country. Those of the tribe who are fixed, live in small hamlets of thatched and terraced houses; in some places they live in caves cut out of the rocks. Some of these rise above each other in three stories, and others are so high as to admit a camel. But most of the tribe dwell in black tents, or moveable hovels of mats, or temporary straw huts; these go up to the high mountains in spring, and stay there till the cold and snow drive them back to the low and warm hills. Their principal stock is goats; but they also breed many small, but serviceable horses. They have no general government; but are divided into societies, some under powerful Khans, and others under a simple democracy; they are all most remarkable for their peaceful conduct among themselves; they have no wars between clans, and private dissension is hardly ever heard of; and yet they are all robbers!

Notorious plunderers, however, as they are, the smallest escort granted by them, secures a traveller a hospitable reception through the whole tribe.

“They are particularly remarkable for their attacks on the caravans, and migratory tribes to the west of the pass of Gholairee. No escorts are ever granted, or applied for there; the caravan is well guarded, and able to deter attacks or fight its way through. No quarter is given to men in these predatory wars; it is said that the Vizeerees would even kill a male child that fell into their hands; but they never molest women; and if one of their sex wander from a caravan, they treat her with kindness, and send guides to escort her to her tribe. Even a man would meet with the same treatment, if he could once make his way into the house of a Vizeeree; the master would then be obliged to treat him with all the attention and good will which is due to a guest. Such is their veracity, that if there is a dispute about a stray goat,

and one party will say it is his, and confirm his assertion by stroking his beard, the other instantly gives it up, without suspicion of fraud.”*

These mountain robbers have really exalted notions of what is due to the gentler sex. So kind to the stray wives or daughters of others, unlike savages or semi-barbarous men, who throw off from their own shoulders nearly all drudgery and labour save that of the chase, or the care of their flocks, these Vizeerees do not require any labour from their women. But not only this; a most extraordinary custom is said to prevail among them—a female prerogative that has no parallel among any other people upon earth, and that reverses what we are in the habit of considering the natural order of things—the women choose their husbands, and not the husbands their wives!

“If a woman is pleased with a man, she sends the drummer of the camp to pin a handkerchief to his cap, with a pin which she has used to fasten her hair. The drummer watches his opportunity, and does this in public, naming the woman, and the man is immediately obliged to marry her, if he can pay her price to her father.”†

The Sheeraunees are a tribe more important still, great part of whose country is occupied by the lofty mountain of Tukhti Solimaun, and the hills which surround its base. Many parts of it are nearly inaccessible; one of the roads is in some places cut out of the steep face of the mountain, and in others supported by beams inserted in the rock, and with all this labour is still impracticable for beasts of burden.

The habits of a pastoral, wandering life, dispose to robbery; but unlike the other tribes, the Sheeraunees are

* Account of the Kingdom of Caubul, by the Honourable Mount-stuart Elphinstone, vol. ii. p. 97.

† Idem, p. 99.

essentially an agricultural people, keeping their valleys in a high state of cultivation, by means of damming the hill streams to irrigate them; and yet they are, perhaps, the greatest robbers of all these Afghans.

They are governed by a chief called the Neeka, or grandfather, who is superstitiously revered by them, and left in possession of an extraordinary degree of power. He commands them in their predatory expeditions, and before the men march they all pass under his turban, which is stretched out for the purpose by the Neeka and a Moolah. This, they think secures them from wounds and death.

They respect none of the neighbouring tribes that pass through their country, in their annual pastoral migrations; they attack them all: they may, indeed, be said to be at war with all the world, since they plunder every traveller that comes within their reach. They even attack the dead!

"While I was in their neighbourhood," says Mr. Elphinstone, "they stopped the body of a Douranee of rank, which was going through their country to be buried at Candahar, and detained it till a ransom had been paid for it."

This is rather worse than a barbarous law that has lingered on even in England to our days, and allows the creditor to arrest the corpse of a debtor. These Sheeraunees, however, enjoy the reputation of unblemished good faith, and a traveller who trusts himself to them, or hires an escort from among them, may pass through their country in perfect security. Mr. Elphinstone says that these curious robbers are very punctual in their prayers, but do not appear to feel much real devotion. In confirmation of this opinion, he adds the following amusing anecdote.

"I once saw a Sheeraunee performing his Namaz,

while some people in the same company were talking of hunting; the size of deer happened to be mentioned, and the Sheeraunee, in the midst of his prostrations, called out that the deer in his country were as large as little bullocks, and then went on with his devotions!"

THE BUCCANEERS OF AMERICA.

Scarcely any class of robbers have been more conspicuous, or have operated on a grander scale, than the Buccaneers and Flibustiers of America. I remember, when a child, being horribly amused by a book that was popular at the time, as it probably still is with young people, which contained the lives of many of these notorious characters, with minute accounts of their cruelties and atrocities. The book is probably as fresh in the memory of most of my readers. It is not my intention to draw from it, or to give a ghastly interest to the present work, by quoting how the monster Morgan tortured his captives, or made them "walk the plank," or similar matters, but to give a brief sketch of these daring adventurers from Captain Burney's voluminous, but interesting and authentic work, which in itself contains a mine of geographical and various information, first collected by the buccaneers. All the other histories of these

men, and they are numerous, are, as Captain Burney remarks, "boastful compositions which have delighted in exaggeration; and what is most mischievous, they have lavished commendations upon acts which demanded reprobation, and have endeavoured to raise miscreants, notorious for their want of humanity, to the rank of heroes, lessening thereby the stain upon robbery, and the abhorrence naturally conceived against cruelty."

Captain Burney thus describes the origin of these lawless associations, which for two centuries were allowed to carry on their depredations.

"The men whose enterprises are to be related, were natives of different European nations, but chiefly of Great Britain and France, and most of them sea-faring people, who being disappointed, by accidents or the enmity of the Spaniards, in their more sober pursuits in the West Indies, and also instigated by thirst for plunder, as much as by desire for vengeance, embodied themselves under different leaders of their own choosing, to make predatory war upon the Spaniards. These men the Spaniards naturally treated as pirates; but some peculiar circumstances which provoked their first enterprises, and a general feeling of enmity against that nation on account of her American conquests, procured them the connivance of the rest of the maritime states of Europe, and to be distinguished, first by the softened appellations of freebooters and adventurers, and afterwards by that of buccaneers."

Spain, indeed, considered the New World as treasure-trove of which she was lawfully and exclusively the mistress. The well known bull of Pope Alexander VI. gave what was then held as a sacred recognition of these exclusive rights. Unaccountable as such folly may now appear, it is an historical fact that the Spaniards at first fancied they could keep their discovery of the West India

islands and of the American continent a secret from the rest of the world, and prevent the ships of other nations from finding their way thither. When, in the year 1517, about twenty-five years after their first settlements, the Spaniards found a large English ship between St. Domingo, and Porto Rico, they were overcome with rage and astonishment; and when this same ship came to the mouth of the port of St. Domingo, and the captain sent on shore to request permission to sell his goods, Francisco di Tapia, the governor of the Spanish fort, ordered the cannons to be fired at her, on which the English were obliged to weigh anchor and sheer off. The news of this unexpected visit, when known in Spain, caused great inquietude, and the governor of the castle of St. Domingo was reprimanded, "because he had not, instead of forcing the English ship to depart by firing his cannon, contrived to seize her, so that no one might have returned to teach others of her nation the route to the Spanish Indies."

In the plenitude of her power and pretensions, however, neither the French nor the English, though when taken they were barbarously treated as pirates, were to be deterred. According to Hakluyt, one Thomas Tyson was sent to the West Indies in 1526, as factor to some English merchants, and many adventurers soon followed him. The French, who had made several voyages to the Brazils, also increased in numbers in the West Indies. All these went with the certainty that they should meet with hostility from the Spaniards, which they resolved to return with hostility. That they did not always wait for an attack, appears by an ingenious phrase of the French adventurers, who, if the first opportunity was in their favour, termed their profiting by it, "*dédommager par avance*." To repress these interlopers, the jealous Spaniards employed armed ships, or *guarda-costas*, the

commanders of which were instructed to take no prisoners! On the other hand, the intruders joined their numbers, made combinations, and descended on different parts of the coast, ravaging the Spanish towns and settlements. A warfare was thus established between Europeans in the West Indies, entirely independent of transactions in Europe. All Europeans not Spaniards, whether there was war or peace between their respective nations in the Old World, on their meeting in the New, regarded each other as friends and allies, with the Spaniards for their common enemy, and called themselves "Brethren of the Coast."

Their principal pursuit was not of a nature to humanise these desperate adventurers, for it was hunting of cattle, the hides and suet of which they could turn to profitable account. "The time when they began to form factories," says Captain Burney, "to hunt cattle for the skins, and to cure the flesh as an article of traffic, is not certain, but it may be concluded that these occupations were begun by the crews of wrecked vessels, or by seamen who had disagreed with their commander; and that the ease, plenty, and freedom from all command and subordination enjoyed in such a life, soon drew others to quit their ships, and join in the same occupations. The ships that touched on the coast supplied the hunters with European commodities, for which they received in return, hides, tallow, and cured meat."

When the Spanish court complained to the different governments of Europe, of which these men were the natural subjects, it was answered: "That the people complained against, acted entirely on their own authority and responsibility, not as the subjects of any prince, and that the king of Spain was at liberty to proceed against them according to his own pleasure." But the lion-hearted Queen Bess retorted more boldly. "That the

Spaniards had drawn these inconveniences upon themselves, by their severe and unjust dealings in their American commerce; for she did not understand why either her subjects, or those of any other European prince, should be debarred from traffic in the West Indies. That as she did not acknowledge the Spaniards to have any title by the donation of the bishop of Rome, so she knew no right they had to any places others than those they were in actual possession of; for that their having touched only here and there upon a coast, and given names to a few rivers and capes, were such insignificant things as could no ways entitle them to a propriety further than in the parts where they actually settled and continued to inhabit.”*

“The Brethren of the Coast” were first known by the general term of *Flibustier*, which is supposed to be nothing but the French sailors’ corruption of our word “freebooter.” The origin of the term *buccaneer*, by which they were afterwards designated, is of curious derivation.

“The flesh of the cattle killed by the hunters was cured to keep good for use, after a manner learned from the Caribbee Indians, which was as follows: the meat was laid to be dried upon a wooden grate or hurdle, which the Indians called *barbecu*, placed at a good distance over a slow fire. The meat when cured was called *boucan*, and the same name was given to the place of their cookery.” From *boucan* they made the verb *boucaner*, which the *Dictionnaire de Trevoux* explains to be “to dry red, without salt,” and then the noun *Boucanier*, *quasi* *buccaneer*.

This curious association, that united the calling of hunters and cruisers, was held together by a very simple

* Camden’s Elizabeth, A. D. 1680.

code of laws and regulations. It is said that every member of it had his chosen and declared comrade, between whom property was in common while they lived together, and when one of the two died, the other succeeded to whatever he possessed. This, however, was not a compulsory regulation, for the buccaneers were known at times to bequeath by will to their relatives or friends in Europe. There was a general right of participation insisted upon in certain things, among which was meat for present consumption and other necessities of life. It has even been said that bolts, locks, and every kind of fastening were prohibited as implying a doubt of "the honour of their vocation." Many men of respectable lineage became buccaneers, on which it was customary for them to drop their family name, and to assume a *nom de guerre*. "Some curious anecdotes," says Captain Burney, "are produced, to show the great respect some of them entertained for religion and morality. A certain filibustier captain, named Daniel, shot one of his crew in the church, for behaving irreverently during the performance of mass. Raveneau de Lussan took the occupation of a buccaneer, because he was in debt, and wished, as every honest man should do, to have wherewithal to satisfy his creditors."

In the year 1625 the English and French together took possession of the island of St. Christopher, and five years later of the small island of Tortuga, near the northwest of Hispaniola, which continued to be for some years the headquarters of the buccaneers, who, whenever the countries of which they were natives were at war with Spain, obtained commissions from Europe, and acted as regular privateers in the West Indies, and on the Spanish main.

In 1638, the Spaniards in great force surprised the island of Tortuga, while most of the adventurers were absent in Hispaniola engaged in the chase of cattle, and

barbarously massacred all who fell into their hands. The Spaniards did not garrison the island. Soon after their departure, the buccaneers, to the numbers of three hundred, again took possession of Tortuga, and then for the first time elected a chief or commander.

As the hostility of the buccaneers was solely directed against the Spaniards, all other Europeans in those latitudes regarded them as champions in the common cause; and the severities which had been exercised against them increased the sympathy for them in the breasts of others, and inflamed their own hearts with the thirst of revenge. Their numbers were speedily recruited by English, French, and Dutch from all parts, and both the pursuits of hunting and cruising were followed with redoubled vigour. At this time, the French in particular seemed to pride themselves in the buccaneers, whom their writers styled "*nos braves*." The English contented themselves with speaking of their "unparalleled exploits."

About the middle of the seventeenth century, the French addicted themselves almost exclusively to hunting. Hispaniola was their great resort, and as the Spaniards found they could not expel them from that island, they themselves destroyed the cattle and wild hogs, in order to render the business of hunting unproductive. This drove the French to other branches of industry, equally opposed to the inclinations of the Spaniards; for finding the chase no longer profitable, they began to cultivate the soil and to cruise more than ever.

The extermination practised upon them by the Spaniards whenever they fell into their hands, seems to have been admitted as a standing and praiseworthy law among the latter people, while it naturally produced an equally sanguinary retaliation on the part of the adventurers. The cruelties of the Spaniards were much circulated in Europe in the form of popular stories, and produced a

great effect. A Frenchman, a native of Languedoc, of the name of Montbars, on reading one of these stories, conceived such an implacable hatred against the Spaniards, that he went to the West Indies, joined the buccaneers, and pursued his vengeance with so much ardour and success, that he obtained the title of "The Exterminator."

Pierre, a native of Dieppe, whose name was graced with the adjunct of "Le Grand," was another famous French buccaneer. In a boat with only twenty-eight men, he surprised and took the ship of the vice-admiral of the Spanish galleons, as she was sailing homeward with a rich freight. He did not, however, disgrace his exploit by massacre, for he set the Spanish crew on shore at Cape Thuron, and carried his prize safely to France.

A native of Portugal, styled Bartolomeo Portuguez, also rendered himself famous about this time for his numerous and wonderful escapes in battle and from the gallows.

"But," continues Captain Burney, "no one of the buccaneers hitherto named, arrived at so great a degree of notoriety as a Frenchman called François L'Olonnais. This man, and Michel le Basque, at the head of 650 men, took the towns of Maracaibo and Gibraltar, in the gulf of Venezuela. The booty they obtained by the plunder and ransom of these places was estimated at 400,000 crowns. The barbarities practised on the prisoners could not be exceeded. L'Olonnais was possessed with an ambition to make himself renowned for being terrible. At one time, it is said, he put the whole crew of a Spanish ship, ninety men, to death, performing himself the office of executioner, by beheading them. He caused the crews of four other vessels to be thrown into the sea; and more than once, in his frenzies, he tore out the hearts of his victims and devoured them! Yet this man

had his encomiasts ! so much will loose notions concerning glory, aided by a little partiality, mislead even sensible men. The career of this savage was terminated by the Indians of the coast of Darien, on which he had landed."

The buccaneers now became so formidable, that several Spanish towns submitted to pay them regular contributions. They were commanded at this time by one Mansvelt, whose country is unknown, but who was followed with equal alacrity by both French and English, and who seems to have been more provident and more ambitious than any chief who had preceded him. He formed a plan for founding an independent buccaneer establishment, and at the head of five hundred men took the island of Santa Katalina for that purpose from the Spaniards, and garrisoned it with one hundred buccaneers, and all the slaves he had taken. A Welshman called Henry Morgan, was the second in command on this expedition. Mansvelt died of illness shortly after, when the garrison he had left was obliged to surrender to the Spaniards.

On the death of Mansvelt, Morgan became the chief, and the most fortunate leader of the buccaneers. A body of several hundred men placed themselves under his command, with whom he took and plundered the town of Puerto del Principe in Cuba. At this place a Frenchman was foully slain by an Englishman. All the French took to arms, but Morgan pacified them by putting the murderer in irons, and afterwards hanging him at Jamaica. Morgan, however, whom the old English author of "the Buccaneers of America" styles Sir Henry Morgan, did not respect the old proverb, of honour among thieves ; in consequence of which, most of the French separated from him. Yet he was strong enough shortly after to attack Porto Bello, one of the

best fortified places belonging to the Spaniards. His bravery and his wonderful address are overshadowed by the shocking cruelties he committed in this expedition. In the attack of a fort, he compelled a number of priests, monks, and nuns, his prisoners, to carry and plant the scaling ladders against the walls; and many of these poor creatures were killed by their countrymen who defended the fort. A castle that had made a bold resistance, on surrendering, was set on fire, and burned to the ground with the garrison within it. Many prisoners died under the tortures that Morgan inflicted on them, to make them discover concealed treasures, which frequently had no existence, save in the cupidity of his imagination.

In the brilliancy of this success, the French forgot Morgan's peccadilloes in money matters, and joined him again in great numbers. There was one large French buccaneer ship, the commander and crew of which refused to act with him. The crafty Welshman dissembled his rage, and pressingly invited the French captain and his officers to dine on board his own ship. These guests he made his prisoners, and in their absence easily took their ship. The men he put in charge of this prize got drunk on the occasion, and the ship was suddenly blown up; whether from the drunkenness and carelessness of the English, or the direful revenge of some Frenchmen, remains matter of doubt. The number of the French prisoners is not mentioned, but, it is said, that three hundred and fifty Englishmen perished with this ship, which was the largest of the fleet.

Morgan's next operation was an attack on Maracaibo and Gibraltar, which unfortunate towns were again sacked. These merciless desperadoes were accustomed to shut up their prisoners in churches, where it was easy to keep guard over them. At Maracaibo and Gib-

raltar, in this instance, so little care was taken of them, that many of these unfortunate captives were actually starved to death in the churches, whilst the buccaneers were revelling in their dwellings.

Morgan was near being destroyed on his return from these places, for the Spaniards had had time to put in order a castle at the entrance of the Lagune of Maracaibo, and three large men of war had arrived, and stationed themselves by the castle to cut off the pirate's retreat.

But the Welshman fitted up one of his vessels as a fire-ship, in which were stuck logs of wood, dressed with hats on to look like men, and which in every thing was made to bear the appearance of a common fighting ship. Following close in the rear of this mute crew, he saw two of the Spanish men of war blown up, and he took the third. He then passed the castle without loss, by means of a stratagem, by which he threw the stupid garrison off their guard. The value of the booty obtained was 250,000 pieces of eight.

The year after this expedition, (in July 1670,) a solemn treaty of peace, known in diplomacy under the name of the "Treaty of America," and made, in the view of terminating the buccaneer warfare, and settling all disputes between the subjects of the two countries in the western hemisphere, was concluded between Great Britain and Spain. But the buccaneers cared nothing for treaties, and would not be pacified. On the contrary, as soon as the news of the peace reached them, they resolved, as of one accord, to undertake some grand expedition, of which the skilful Morgan should have the command. In the beginning of December 1670, thirty-seven vessels, having on board altogether more than two thousand men, joined the Welshman at Cape Tiburon, the place of general rendezvous he had himself appointed.

Lots were then cast as to which of the three places, Carthagena, Vera Cruz, and Panama, should be attacked. The lot fell upon Panama, which was believed to be the richest of the three.

Preparatory to this arduous undertaking, Morgan employed men to hunt cattle and cure meat, and sent vessels to procure maize, at the settlements on the main. For the distribution of the plunder they were to obtain, specific articles of agreement were drawn up and subscribed to. Morgan, as commander in chief, was to receive one hundredth part of the whole; each captain was to have eight shares; those who should be maimed and wounded were provided for, and additional rewards promised for those who should particularly distinguish themselves by their bravery and conduct. On the 16th of December, the fleet set sail, and on the 20th they retook the island of Santa Katalina, which Morgan, who had embraced the notion of Mansvelt to erect himself into the head of a free state, independent of any European nation, resolved should be the centre of his establishment and power. The buccaneers next took the castle of San Lorenzo, at the entrance of the river Chagre, on the West India side of the American isthmus, losing one hundred men in killed, and having seventy wounded. Of three hundred and fourteen Spaniards who composed the garrison, more than two hundred were put to death.

Morgan had now a *pied-à-terre*, and a good place of retreat on one side of the wild and perilous isthmus; he accordingly set his prisoners to work to repair and strengthen the castle of San Lorenzo, where he left five hundred men as a garrison, besides one hundred and fifty men to take care of the ships which were left in the Atlantic, while he should go to the shores of the Pacific. It was on the 18th of January 1671, that he

set forward at the head of twelve hundred men for Panama. The length of the march from ocean to ocean was not long, but rendered tremendous by the nature of the intervening country and the wildness of its Indian inhabitants. One party of this pirate army, with artillery and stores, embarked in canoes, to ascend the river Chagre, the course of which is very serpentine. At the end of the second day they were obliged to quit their canoes, for a vast number of fallen trees obstructed them, and the river was found in many places almost dry ; but the way by land offered so many difficulties to the carriage of their stores, that they again resorted to their canoes, where they could, making very little way. On the sixth day, when they had nearly exhausted their travelling store of provision, and death by hunger in that horrid wilderness stared them in the face, they had the good fortune to discover a barn full of maize. The native Indians fled at their approach, and could never be caught. On the seventh day they reached a village called Cruz, which was set on fire and abandoned by its inhabitants, who fled as the buccaneers approached. They, however, found there a sack of bread and fifteen jars of Peruvian wine. They were still eight leagues distant from Panama. On the ninth day of the journey, they saw the expanse of the South Sea before them, and around them some fields with cattle grazing. As evening approached, they came in sight of the church towers of Panama, when they halted and waited impatiently for the morrow. They had lost in their march thus far, by being fired at from concealed places, ten men ; and had ten more wounded.

The city of Panama is said to have consisted at that time of seven thousand houses, many of which were edifices of considerable magnificence and built with cedar : but no regular fortifications defended the wealth

and magnificence of the place. Some works had been raised, but in most parts the city lay open, and was to be won and defended by plain fighting. The buccaneers asserted that the Spaniards had a force amounting to two thousand infantry and four hundred horse; but it is supposed that this was in part made up of inhabitants and slaves.

When the buccaneers resumed their march at an early hour next morning, the Spaniards came out to meet them, preceded by herds of wild bulls, which they drove upon the adventurers to disorder their ranks. But the buccaneers, as hunters of these wild animals, were too well acquainted with their habits to be discomposed by them; and this attack of the van does not seem to have had much effect. The Spaniards, however, must have made an obstinate resistance, for it was night before they gave way, and the buccaneers became masters of the city. During the long battle, and, indeed, all that day and night, the buccaneers gave no quarter. Six hundred Spaniards fell. The loss of the buccaneers is not specified, but it appears to have been very considerable.

When master of the city, Morgan was afraid that his men might get drunk and be surprised and cut off by the Spaniards: to prevent this, he caused it to be reported that all the wine in the city had been expressly poisoned by the inhabitants. The dread of poison kept the fellows sober. But Morgan had scarcely taken up his quarters in Panama when several parts of the city burst out into flames, which, fed by the cedar wood and other combustible materials of which the houses were chiefly built, spread so rapidly, that in a short time a great part of the city was burnt to the ground. It has been disputed whether this was done by design or accident—by the buccaneers or the despairing Spaniards;

but it appears that Morgan, who always charged it upon the Spaniards, gave all the assistance he could to such of the inhabitants as endeavoured to stop the progress of the fire, which, however, was not quite extinguished for weeks. Among the buildings destroyed, was a factory house belonging to the Genoese, who then carried on the trade of supplying the Spaniards with slaves from Africa.

The licentiousness, rapacity, and cruelty of the buccaneers had no bounds. "They spared," says Exquemelin, a Dutchman, and one of the party, "in these their cruelties, no sex nor condition whatsoever. As to religious persons (monks and nuns, he means) and priests, they granted them less quarter than others, unless they procured a considerable sum of money for their ransom." Detachments scoured the country to plunder and to bring in prisoners. Many of the unfortunate inhabitants escaped with their effects by sea, and reached the islands that are thickly clustered in the bay of Panama. But Morgan found a large boat lying aground in the port, which he launched and manned with a numerous crew, and sent her to cruise among those islands. A galeon, on board which the nuns of a convent had taken refuge, and where much money, plate, and other effects of value had been lodged, had a very narrow escape from these desperadoes. They took several vessels in the bay. One of them was large and admirably adapted for cruising. This opened a new prospect, that was brilliant and enticing; an unexplored ocean studded with islands was before them, and some of the buccaneers began to consult how they might leave their chief, Morgan, and try their fortunes on the South Sea, whence they proposed to sail, with the plunder they should obtain, by the East Indies to Europe. This diminution of force would have been fatal to Morgan, who, therefore,

as soon as he got a hint of the design, cut away the masts of the ship, and burned every boat and vessel lying at Panama that could suit their purpose.

At length, on the 24th of February 1672, about four weeks after the taking of Panama, Morgan and his men departed from the still smouldering ruins of that unfortunate city, taking with them one hundred and seventy-five mules loaded with spoil, and six hundred prisoners, part of whom were detained to carry burdens across the isthmus, and others for the ransom expected for their release. Among the latter were many women and children, who were made to suffer cruel fatigue, hunger, and thirst, and artfully made to apprehend being carried to Jamaica and sold as slaves, that they might the more earnestly endeavour to procure money for their ransom. When these poor creatures threw themselves on their knees, and weeping and tearing their hair, begged of Morgan to let them return to their families, his brutal answer was, that "he came not there to listen to cries and lamentations, but to seek money." This idol of his soul, indeed, he sought from his comrades as well as his captives, and in such a manner that it is astonishing they did not blow his brains out. In the middle of his march back to the fort of San Lorenzo, he drew up his men, and caused every one of them to take a solemn oath, that he had not reserved for himself or concealed any plunder, but had delivered all fairly into the common stock. (This ceremony, it appears, was not uncommon among the buccaneers.) "But," says Exquemelin, "Captain Morgan having had experience that those loose fellows would not much stickle to swear falsely in such a case, he commanded every one to be searched; and that it might not be taken as an affront, he permitted himself to be the first searched, even to the very soles of his shoes. The French buccaneers who

had engaged in this expedition with Morgan, were not well satisfied with this new custom of searching; but their number being less than that of the English, they were forced to submit."

As soon as the marauders arrived at San Lorenzo, a division was made of the booty, according to the proportions agreed upon before sailing from Hispaniola. But the narrative says, "Every person received his portion, or rather what part thereof Captain Morgan was pleased to give him. For so it was, that his companions, even those of his own nation, complained of his proceedings; for they judged it impossible that, of so many valuable robberies, no greater share should belong to them than two hundred pieces of eight per head. But Captain Morgan was deaf to these, and to many other complaints of the same kind."

Morgan, however, having well filled his own purse, determined to withdraw quietly from the command: "Which he did," says the narrative of the buccaneer, "without calling any council, or bidding any one adieu; but went secretly on board his own ship, and put out to sea without giving notice, being followed only by three or four vessels of the whole fleet, who, it is believed, went shares with him in the greatest part of the spoil."

The rest of the buccaneer vessels left before the castle of San Lorenzo at Chagre, soon separated. Morgan sailed straight to Jamaica, where he had begun to make fresh levies of men to accompany him to the island of St. Katalina, which he purposed to hold as his own independent state, and to make it a common place of refuge for pirates; but the arrival of a new governor at Jamaica, Lord John Vaughan, with strict orders to enforce the late treaty with Spain, obliged him to abandon his plan.*

* This audacious and barbarous rover went to England, where

The buccaneers, however, were not put down by this new governor of Jamaica, but under different leaders continued their depredations for more than twenty years longer. Lord John Vaughan proclaimed a pardon for all piratical offences committed to that time, and promised a grant of thirty-five acres of land to every buccaneer who should claim the benefit of the proclamation and engage to apply himself to planting. I am startled almost into incredulity by what follows.

“The author of the History of Jamaica says, ‘This offer was intended as a lure to engage the buccaneers to come into port with their effects, that the governor might, and which he was directed to do, take from them the tenths and the fifteenths of their booty as the dues of the crown, and of the colonial government for granting them commissions.’ Those who had neglected to obtain commis-

he so ingratiated himself with King Charles II. or with his ministers, that he received the honour of knighthood and the appointment of commissioner of the admiralty court in Jamaica. In 1681 the Earl of Carlisle, then governor of that island, returned to England on the plea of bad health, and left as deputy governor, Morgan the buccaneer, the plunderer of Panama, but who was now in reality Sir Henry Morgan. In his new capacity he was far from being favourable or lenient to his old associates, “some of whom suffered the extreme hardship of being tried and hanged under his authority.” Morgan was certainly a villain of the first water, for when a crew of buccaneers, most of whom were his own countrymen, fell into his hands, he delivered them over (he was strongly suspected of having sold them) to the vindictive Spaniards. His “brief authority” only lasted till the next year, when he was superseded by the arrival of a new governor from England. He continued, however, to hold office in Jamaica during the rest of the moral reign of Charles II. though accused by the Spaniards of conniving with the buccaneers. In the next reign the Spanish court had influence sufficient to procure his being sent home prisoner from the West Indies. He was kept in prison three years, but no charge being brought forward against him, the worthy knight was liberated.

sions would of course have to make their peace by an increased composition. In consequence of this scandalous procedure, the Jamaica buccaneers, to avoid being so taxed, kept aloof from Jamaica, and were provoked to continue their old occupations. Most of them joined the French flibustiers at Tortuga. Some were afterwards apprehended at Jamaica, where they were brought to trial, condemned as pirates and executed."

A war entered into by the English and French against the Dutch, gave, for a time, employment to the buccaneers and flibustiers, and a short respite to the Spaniards, who, however, exercised their wonted barbarous revenge on their old enemies, whenever and in whatsoever manner they fell into their hands.

In 1673, for example, they murdered in cold blood three hundred French flibustiers, who had been shipwrecked on their coast at Porto Rico, sparing only seventeen of their officers. These officers were put on board a vessel bound for the continent, with the intention of transporting them to Peru; but an English buccaneer cruiser met the ship at sea, liberated the Frenchmen, and, in all probability cut the throats of the Spaniards.

Ever since the plundering of Panama by Morgan, the imaginations of the buccaneers had been heated by the prospect of expeditions to the South Sea. This became known to the Spaniards, and gave rise to numerous forebodings and prophecies, both in Spain and in Peru, of great invasions by sea and by land.

In 1673 an Englishman of the name of Thomas Peche, who had formerly been a buccaneer in the West Indies, fitted out a ship in England for a piratical voyage to the South Sea against the Spaniards; and two years after, La Sound, a Frenchman, with a small body of daring adventurers, attempted to cross the Isthmus, as Morgan had done, (though not by the same route,) but he could not

get farther than the town of Cheapo, where he was driven back. These events greatly increased the alarm of the Spaniards, who, according to Dampier, prophesied with confidence "that the English privateers in the West Indies would that year (1675) open a door into the South Seas."

But it was not till five years after, or in 1680, when, having contracted friendship with the Darien Indians, and particularly with a small tribe called the Mosquitos, the English adventurers again found their way across the Isthmus to those alarmed shores. Some of these Mosquito Indians, who seem to have been a noble race of savages deserving of better companions than the buccaneers, went with this party, being animated by a deadly hatred of the Spaniards, and an extraordinary attachment to the English.

The buccaneers who engaged in this expedition were the crews of seven vessels, amounting altogether to three hundred and sixty-six men, of whom thirty-seven were left to guard the ships during the absence of those who went on the expedition, which was not expected to be of long continuance. There were several men of some literary talent among the marauders, who have written accounts of the proceedings, which have the most romantic interest. These were Basil Ringrose, Barty Sharp, William Dampier, who, though a common seaman, was endowed with great observation and a talent for description, and Lionel Wafer, a surgeon providently engaged by the buccaneers, whose "Description of the Isthmus of Darien" is one of the most instructive, and decidedly the most amusing book of travels we have in our language.

It was on the 16th of April, that the expedition passed over from Golden Island, and landed in Darien, each man provided with four cakes of bread called dough-boys, with a fusil, a pistol, and a hanger. They began their ardu-

ous march marshalled in divisions, each with its commander and distinguishing flag. Many Darien Indians came to supply them with provisions, and to keep them company as confederates; among these were two chiefs, who went by the names of Captain Andreas and Captain Antonio.

The very first day's journey discouraged four of the buccaneers, who returned to their ships. The object of the expedition was to reach and plunder the town of Santa Maria, near the gulf of San Miguel, on the South Sea side of the isthmus; and on the afternoon of the second day they came to a river, which Captain Andreas, the Indian chief, told them, crossed the isthmus and ran by Santa Maria. On the third day they came to a house belonging to a son of Captain Andreas, who wore a wreath of gold about his head, which made the buccaneers call him "King Golden Cap."

Wherever there were Indian habitations, they were most kindly and hospitably received. On the evening of the fourth day, they gained a point whence the river of Santa Maria was navigable, and where canoes were prepared for them. The next morning as they were about to depart, the harmony of the party was disturbed by the quarrel of two of the buccaneer commanders. John Coxon fired his musket at Peter Harris, which Harris was going to return, when the others interfered and effected a reconciliation. Here seventy of the buccaneers embarked in fourteen canoes, in each of which there went two Indians to manage them, and guide them down the stream. This mode of travelling, owing to the scarcity of water and other impediments, was as wearisome as marching. After enduring tremendous fatigue, the land and water party met on the eighth day of the journey at a beachy point of land, where the river, being joined by another stream, became broad and deep. This had often

been a rendezvous of the Darien Indians, when they collected for attack or defence against the Spaniards; and here the whole party now made a halt, to rest themselves, and to clean and prepare their arms.

On the ninth day, buccaneers and Indians, in all nearly six hundred men, embarked in sixty-eight canoes, got together by the Indians, and glided pleasantly down the river. At midnight they landed within a half a mile of the town of Santa Maria. The next morning, at day-break, they heard the Spanish garrison firing muskets and beating the *réveillée*. It was seven in the morning when they came to the open ground before the fort, when the Spaniards commenced firing upon them. This fort was nothing but a stockade, which the buccaneers took without the loss of a single man—an immunity which did not teach them mercy, for they killed twenty-six Spaniards, and wounded sixteen.

The Indians, however, were still less merciful. After the Spaniards had surrendered, they took many of them into the adjoining woods, where they killed them with their spears, and if the buccaneers had not prevented them, they would not have left a single Spaniard alive. The long and bloody grievances these savages had scored against their conquerors, was aggravated here by the circumstance that one of their chiefs, or, as the buccaneers call him, the King of Darien, found in the fort his eldest daughter, who had been forced from her father's habitation by one of the Spanish garrison, and was pregnant by him!

The Spaniards had by some means been warned of the intended visit to Santa Maria, and had secreted or sent away almost every thing that was of value. "Though we examined our prisoners severely," says a buccaneer, "the whole that we could pillage, both in the town and fort, amounted only to twenty pounds' weight of gold, and

a small quantity of silver ; whereas, three days sooner we should have found three hundred pounds weight in gold in the fort." It ought to be mentioned, that the Spaniards were in the habit of collecting considerable quantities of gold from the mountains in the neighbourhood of Santa Maria.

This disappointment was felt very severely, and whether it was previously decided, or now entered their heads to seek compensation for this disappointment, the majority of the buccaneers resolved to proceed to the South Sea. The boldness of this resolution will be felt by reflecting, that they had only canoes to go in, and that they might meet at their very outset a lofty Spanish galeon or ship of war, that might sink half of their frail boats at a broadside. Some of them, indeed, were deterred by this prospect. John Coxon, the commander, who had fired his musket at Peter Harris, and who seems to have been a contemptible bully, was for returning across the isthmus to their ships, and so were his followers. To win him over, those who were for the South Sea, though they had a mean opinion of his capability, offered him the post of general, or commander in chief, which Coxon accepted, and as it was on the condition that he and his men should join in the scheme, all the buccaneers went together. The Darien chief Andreas, with his son Golden Cap, and some followers, also continued with the rovers, but the greater part of the Darien Indians left them at Santa Maria, and returned to their homes.

On the 17th of April, the expedition embarked, and fell down the river to the gulf of San Miguel, which they did not reach until the following morning, owing to a flood tide. They were now fairly in the South Sea ! The prophecy of the Spaniards was accomplished, and the buccaneers looked across that magnificent expanse of waters with sanguine hope. On the 19th of April, they en-

tered the vast bay of Panama, and fortunately captured at one of the islands, a Spanish vessel of thirty tons, on board of which one hundred and thirty of the buccaneers immediately threw themselves, overjoyed to be relieved from the cramped and crowded state they had endured in the canoes—though of a certainty, even now, so many men on board so small a vessel, could leave small room for comfort.

The next day, they took another small bark. On the 22d, they rendezvoused at the island of Chepillo, near the mouth of the river Cheapo; and in the afternoon began to row along shore from that island towards the city of Panama. The Spaniards there had obtained intelligence of the buccaneers being in the bay, and prepared to meet them. Eight vessels were lying in the road; three of these they hastily equipped, manning them with the crews of all the vessels, and with men from shore; the whole, however, according to the buccaneer accounts, not exceeding two hundred and thirty men; and of these, one third only were Europeans—the rest mulattoes and negroes. The great disparity therefore was in the nature of the vessels. "We had sent away the Spanish barks we had taken," says one of the buccaneers, "to seek fresh water, so that we had only canoes for the fight, and in them not two hundred men."

As this fleet of canoes came in sight at day break on the 23d, the three armed Spanish ships got under sail, and stood towards them. The conflict was severe, and lasted the greater part of the day. The Spanish ships fought with great bravery, but their crews were motley and unskilful, whilst the buccaneers were expert seamen, and well trained to the use of their arms. Richard Sawkins was the hero of the day; after three repulses, he succeeded in boarding and capturing one of the Spanish ships, which decided the victory. Another ship was car-

ried by boarding soon after, and the third saved herself by flight. The Spanish commander fell with many of his people. The buccaneers had eighteen killed, and above thirty wounded. Peter Harris, the captain, who had been fired at by Coxon, was among the wounded, and died two days after. As for John Coxon, who was nominally general, he showed great backwardness in the engagement, which lost him the confidence of the rovers. The Darien chiefs were in the heat of the battle, and behaved bravely.

The buccaneers, not thinking themselves strong enough to land and attack Panama, contented themselves with capturing the vessels that were at anchor in the road before the city. One of these was a ship named the *Trinidad*, of 400 tons burden, a fast sailer and in good condition. She had on board a cargo principally consisting of wine, sugar, and sweetmeats; and, moreover, a considerable sum of money was found. In the other prizes they found flour and ammunition. Two of these, with the *Trinidad*, they fitted out for cruising.

Thus, in less than a week after their arrival on the coast of the South Sea, they were in possession of a fleet not ill equipped, with which they formed a close blockade of Panama for the present, and for the future might scour that ocean.

Two or three days after the battle with the Spaniards, discord broke out among the buccaneers. The taunts and reflections that fell upon the General, Coxon, and some of his followers, determined him and seventy men to return, by the way they had come, across the isthmus to the Atlantic. The Darien chiefs, Andreas and Antonio, also departed for their homes, but Andreas, to prove his good will to the buccaneers, who remained in the South Sea, left a son and one of his nephews with them.

Richard Sawkins, who had behaved so well in the bat-

tle, was now unanimously chosen general or chief commander. After staying ten days before Panama, they retired to the island of Taboga, in the near neighbourhood. Here they stopped nearly a fortnight in expectation of the arrival of a rich ship from Lima. This ship came not, but several other vessels fell into their hands, by which they obtained nearly sixty thousand dollars in specie, 1200 sacks of flour, 2000 jars of wine, a quantity of brandy, sugar, sweetmeats, poultry, and other provisions, some gunpowder, shot, &c. Among their prisoners was a number of unfortunate negro slaves, which tempted the Spanish merchants of Panama to go to the buccaneers; and to buy as many of the slaves as they were inclined to sell. These merchants paid two hundred pieces of eight for every negro, and they sold to the buccaneers all such stores and commodities as they stood in need of.

Ringrose, one of the buccaneers, relates that during these communications the governor of Panama sent to demand of their leader, "Why, during a time of peace between England and Spain, Englishmen should come into those seas to commit injury? and from whom they had their commission so to do?" Sawkins replied, "That he and his companions came to assist their friend, the king of Darien, (the said chief Andreas,) who was the rightful lord of Panama, and all the country thereabouts. That as they had come so far, it was reasonable that they should receive some satisfaction for their trouble: and if the governor would send to them 500 pieces of eight for each man, and 1000 for each commander, and would promise not any further to annoy the Darien Indians, their allies, that then the buccaneers would desist from hostilities, and go quietly about their business." The governor could scarcely be expected to comply with these moderate demands.

The General Sawkins, having learnt from one of the Spaniards who traded with the buccaneers, that the bishop of Panama was a person whom he had formerly taken prisoner in the West Indies, sent him a small present as a token of regard and old acquaintanceship: the bishop in return sent Sawkins a gold ring!

Having consumed all the live stock within reach, and tired of waiting for the rich ship from Peru, the buccaneers sailed on the 15th of May to the island of Otoque, where they found hogs and poultry, and rested a day. From Otoque they departed with three ships and two small barks, steering out of the bay of Panama, and then westward for the town of Pueblo Nuevo. In this short voyage a violent storm separated from the ships the two barks, which never joined them again. One of them was taken by the Spaniards, who shot the men; and the crew of the other contrived to reach Coxon's party, and to recross the isthmus with them. On reaching Pueblo Nuevo, the buccaneers, instead of meeting with an easy prize, sustained a complete discomfiture, and lost their brave commander Sawkins, who was shot dead by the Spaniards, as he was advancing at the head of his men towards a breastwork. "Captain Sawkins," said his comrade Ringrose, "was a valiant and generous spirited man, and beloved more than any other we ever had among us, which he well deserved." His loss not only disheartened the whole, but induced between sixty and seventy men, and all the Darien Indians, to abandon the expedition and return to the isthmus.

Only one hundred and forty-six buccaneers now remained with Bartholomew Sharp, whom they had chosen commander, but who, though clerk enough to write and publish, on his return to England, a very readable account of his adventures, did not at first shine as a leader. In their retreat from Pueblo Nuevo, they took a ship loaded

with indigo, butter, and pitch, and burned two others. They lay at anchor for some time at the island of Quibo, where they pleasantly and profitably employed their time in taking "red deer, turtle, and oysters, so large, says Ringrose, that they were obliged to cut them into four quarters, each quarter being a good mouthful."

On the 6th of June, Sharp, who had boasted he would "take them a cruise, whereby he doubted not they would gain a thousand pounds per man," sailed with two ships for the coast of Peru. But on the 17th he came to anchor at the island of Gorgona, where the buccaneers idled away their time till near the end of July, doing nothing worthy of mention, except killing "a snake eleven feet long, and fourteen inches in circumference."

On the 13th of August they got as far as the island of Plata, where Sharp again came to anchor. From Plata they beat to the south, and on the 25th, when near Cape St. Elena, they captured, after a short contest, in which one buccaneer was killed and two were wounded, a Spanish ship bound for Panama. In this prize they found 3000 dollars. The ship they sank, but it is not said what they did with the crew; as, however, Ringrose makes particular mention that they "punished a friar and shot him upon deck, casting him overboard while he was yet alive," it is to be presumed he was the only sufferer, and that the crew were kept to work as seamen or servants, or in hopes that they might be ransomed, or merely until some convenient opportunity were found for dismissing them.

One of the two vessels in which the buccaneers cruised, was now found to sail so badly, that she was abandoned, and they all embarked together in the Trinidad. On the 4th of September, they took another ship bound for Lima. It appears here to have been a custom among the buccaneers, that the first who boarded, should be allowed some

extra privilege of plunder; for Ringrose says, "we cast dice for the first entrance, and the lot fell to the larboard watch, so twenty men belonging to that watch entered her." They took out of this prize as much of the cargo as suited them; they then put some of their prisoners in her, and dismissed her with only one mast standing and one sail.

Sharp passed Callao at a distance, fearing the Spaniards might have ships of war there. On the 26th of October, he attempted a landing at the town of Arica, but was prevented by a heavy surf, and the armed appearance of the place. This was the more mortifying, as the stock of fresh water was so reduced, that the men were only allowed half a pint a day each; and it is related, that a pint of water was sold in the ship for thirty dollars. They bore away, however, for the island of Llo, where they succeeded in landing, and obtained water, wine, flour, fruit, and other provisions, and did all the mischief they could to the houses and plantations, because the Spaniards refused to purchase their forbearance either with money or cattle.

From Llo, keeping still southward, they came, on the 3d of December, to the town of La Serena, which they took without opposition. They here obtained, besides other things, five hundred pounds weight of silver, but were very near having their ship burned by a desperate Spaniard, who went by night on a float made of a horse's hide, blown up like a bladder, and crammed oakum and brimstone, and other combustible matters between the rudder and the stern-post, to which he set fire by a match, and then escaped. From La Serena, the buccaneers made for Juan Fernandez, at which interesting, romantic island, they arrived on Christmas day, and remained some time. Here they again disagreed, some of them wishing to sail immediately homeward by the

strait of Magalhanes, and others desiring to try their fortunes longer in the South Sea. Sharp was of the homeward party ; but the majority being against him, deposed him from the command, and elected in his stead, John Watling, "an old privateer, and esteemed a stout seaman." Articles between Watling and the crew were drawn up in writing, and subscribed in due form.

One narrative, however, says, "the true occasion of the grudge against Sharp was, that he had got by these adventures almost a thousand pounds, whereas many of our men were scarce worth a groat ; and good reason there was for their poverty, for at the Isle of Plata, and other places, they had lost all their money to their fellow buccaneers at dice ; so that some had a great deal, and others just nothing. Those who were thrifty, sided with captain Sharp, but the others, being the greatest number, turned Sharp out of his command ; and Sharp's party were persuaded to have patience, seeing they were the fewest, and had money to lose, which the other party had not." But Dampier says, Sharp was dismissed the command by general consent, the buccaneers being satisfied neither with his courage nor his conduct.

John Watling, as Richard Sawkins before him, had a glimmering of devotion in his composition. He began his command by insisting on the observance of the Lord's day by the buccaneers. "This day, January the 9th, 1681," says Ringrose, "was the first Sunday that ever we kept by command, since the loss and death of our valiant commander Captain Sawkins, who once threw the dice overboard, finding them in use on the said day." On the 12th of January, they were scared away from their anchorage at Juan Fernandez, by the appearance of three sail, and left behind them on shore, William, a Musquito Indian.

The three vessels, whose appearance had caused them

to move in such a hurry, were armed Spanish ships. They remained in sight two days, but showed no inclination to fight. The buccaneers had not a single great gun in their ship, and must have trusted to their musketry and to boarding; yet it seems they must have contemplated making an attack themselves, as they remained so long without resigning the honour of the field to the Spaniards. They then sailed eastward for the coast of the continent, where they intended to attack the rich town of Arica.

On the 26th of January, they made the small island of Yqueque, about twenty-five leagues from Arica, where they plundered an Indian village of provisions, and made prisoners of two old Spaniards and two Indians. The next day Watling examined one of the old Spaniards, concerning the force at Arica, and taking offence at his answer ordered him to be shot—which was done! Shortly after, he took a small bark, laden with fresh water for the little island, which was destitute of it.

The next night Watling, with one hundred men, left the ship in the boats and the small bark they had taken, and rowed for Arica. They landed on the continent about five leagues to the south of Arica before it was light, and remained there all day concealed among the rocks. When the shades of night fell, they crept along the coast without being perceived, and at the next morning dawn Watling landed with ninety-two men. They were still four miles from the town, but they marched boldly and rapidly forward, and gained an entrance with the loss of three men killed and two wounded. Though in possession of the town, Watling neglected a fort or little castle, and when he had lost time and was hampered by the number of prisoners he had made for the sake of their ransoms, and the inhabitants had recovered from their first panic, and had thrown themselves into the

fort, he found that place too strong for him. He attacked it, however, making use of the cruel expedient of placing his prisoners in the front of his own men; but the defenders of the fort, though they might kill countrymen, friends and relatives, were not by this deterred, but kept up a steady fire, and twice repulsed the buccaneers. Meanwhile the Spaniards outside of the fort, made head from all parts, and hemmed in the buccaneers, who, from assailants, found themselves obliged to look for their own defence and retreat. Watling paid for his imprudence with his life, and two quarter-masters, the boatswain, and some of the best men among the rovers, fell before the fort. When the rest withdrew from the town, and made for their boats, they were harassed the whole way by a distant firing from the Spaniards, but they effected their retreat in tolerably good order. The whole party, however, narrowly escaped destruction; for the Spaniards had forced from the prisoners they took, the signals which had been agreed upon with the men left four miles off in charge of the buccaneer boats; and having made these signals, the boats had quitted their post, to which the rovers were now retreating, and were setting sail to run down to the town, when the most swift of foot of the band reached the sea-side just in time to call them back. They embarked in the greatest hurry and ran for their ships, too much disheartened to attempt to capture three vessels that lay at anchor in the roads.

In this mismanaged attack on Arica, the buccaneers lost between killed and taken, twenty-eight men, besides having eighteen wounded. Among the prisoners taken by the Spaniards, were two surgeons, to whom had been confided the care of the wounded. "We could have brought off our doctors," says Ringrose, "but they got to drinking while we were assaulting the fort, and when we called to them, they would not come.

The Spaniards gave quarter to the surgeons, they being able to do them good service in that country; but as to the wounded men taken prisoners, they were all knocked on the head!"

The deposed chief, Barty Sharp, was now reinstated in the command, being esteemed a leader of safer conduct than any other. It was unanimously agreed to quit the South Sea, which they proposed to do, not by sailing round the American continent by the strait of Magalhanes, but by recrossing the isthmus of Darien. They did not, however, immediately alter their course, but still beating to the south, landed on the 10th of March at Guasco, whence they carried off one hundred and twenty sheep, eighty goats, two hundred bushels of corn, and a plentiful supply of fresh water. They then stood to the north, and on the 27th passed Arica at a respectful distance: "our former entertainment," says one of the buccaneers, "having been so very bad, that we were no ways encouraged to stop there again."

By the 16th of April, however, when they were near the island Plata, where on a former occasion many of them "had lost their money to their fellow buccaneers at dice," the spirits of some of the crew had so much revived, that they were again willing to try their fortunes longer in the South Sea. But one party would not continue under Sharp, and others would not recognise a new commander. As neither party would yield, it was determined to separate, and agreed, "that which party soever upon polling should be found to have the majority should keep the ship." Sharp's party proved the most numerous, and they kept the vessel. The minority, which consisted of forty-four Europeans, two Mosquito Indians, and a Spanish Indian, took the long boat and the canoes, as had been agreed, and separating from their old comrades, proceeded to the gulf of San

Miguel, where they landed, and travelled on foot over the isthmus by much the same route as they had come. From the Atlantic side of the isthmus they found their way to the West Indies. In this seceding party were the two authors, William Dampier and Lionel Wafer, the surgeon. Dampier published a brief sketch of this Expedition to the South Sea, with an account of his return across the isthmus; but of the latter the most entertaining description was written by Wafer, who, meeting with an accident on his journey back, which disabled him from keeping pace with his countrymen, was left behind, and remained for some months the guest of the Darien Indians. Living among them as he did, he had ample opportunity of informing himself of all their manners and customs, and I know no book that gives so complete and amusing a picture of the habits of savage life, unless it be the volume on the New Zealanders, published by the "Society for the Diffusion of Knowledge."

Sharp, with his diminished crew, which must have been reduced to about seventy men, sailed with the ship northward to the gulf of Nicoya. Meeting no booty there, he returned to the island Plata, picking up three prizes in his way. The first was a ship called the San Pedro, with a lading of cocoa-nuts, and 21,000 pieces of eight in chests, and 16,000 in bags, besides plate. The money in bags, with all the loose plunder, was immediately divided, each man receiving two hundred and thirty-four pieces of eight. The money in chests was reserved for a future division. Their second prize was a packet from Panama bound to Callao, by which they learned that in Panama it was believed that all the buccaneers had returned over land to the West Indies. The third was a ship called the San Rosario, which made a bold resistance, and did not submit until

her captain was killed. She came from Callao with a cargo of wine, brandy, oil, and fruit, and had in her as much money as yielded ninety-four dollars to each buccaneer. Through their ignorance of metals they missed a much greater booty. There were seven hundred pigs of plate which they mistook for tin, on account of its not being refined and fitted for coining. They only took one of the seven hundred pigs, and two thirds of this they melted down into bullets and otherwise squandered away. After having beaten along the coast, coming at times to anchor, making a few discoveries, and giving names to islands and bays, but taking no prizes, they sailed early in November from the shores of Patagonia. Their navigation hence, as Captain Burney remarks, was more than could be imagined: it was like the journey of travellers by night in a strange country without a guide. The weather being very stormy, they were afraid to venture through the strait of Magalhanes, but ran to the south to go round the Tierra del Fuego. Spite of tempests, clouds, and darkness, and immense ice-bergs, they doubled in safety the redoubtable Cape Horn, nine months after their comrades, who went back by the isthmus of Darien, had left them.

On the 5th of December they made a division of such of their spoils as had been reserved. Each man's share amounted to three hundred and twenty-eight pieces of eight.

On January the 28th, 1682, they made the island of Barbadoes, where the British frigate *Richmond* was lying. "We having acted in all our voyage without a commission," says Ringrose, "dared not be so bold as to put in, lest the said frigate should seize us for privateering, and strip us of all we had got in the whole voyage." They, therefore, sailed to Antigua. People

may say what they choose about the virtues of old times! It is a notorious fact that statesmen and the servants of government were in those days corrupt, rapacious, dishonest. It seems to have been an established practice among the buccaneers to purchase impunity by bribing our governors of the West India islands. But at Antigua, Sharp now found, as Governor, Colonel Codrington, an honest man, who would not allow his lady to accept of a present of jewels sent by the buccaneers as a propitiatory offering, nor give the buccaneers leave to enter the harbour. The buccaneers then separated. Some stole into Antigua on board of other craft; Sharp and some others landed at Nevis, whence they procured a passage to England. Their ship, the *Trinidad*, which they had captured in the Bay of Panama, was left to seven desperadoes of the company, who having lost every farthing by gaming, had no inducement to lead them to England, but remained where they were, in the hope of picking up new associates, with whom they might again try their fortunes as free rovers.

When Bartholomew Sharp arrived in England, he and a few of his men were apprehended and brought before a court of admiralty, where, at the instance of the Spanish ambassador, they were tried for piracies in the South Sea. One of the principal charges against them was taking the Spanish ship *Rosario*, and killing the captain and one of her men. "But it was proved," says the author of an anonymous narrative, who was one of the buccaneers tried, "that the Spaniards fired at us first, and it was judged that we ought to defend ourselves." I can hardly understand how it should have been so, but it is said, from the general defectiveness of the evidence produced, they all escaped conviction.

Three of Sharp's men were also tried at Jamaica, one of whom "being wheedled into an open confession, was condemned and hanged; the other two stood it out, and escaped for want of witnesses to prove the fact against them."

"Thus terminated," adds Captain Burney, "what may be called the First Expedition of the Buccaneers in the South Sea; the boat excursion by Morgan's men in the Bay of Panama being of too little consequence to be so reckoned. They had now made successful experiments of the route both by sea and land; and the Spaniards in the South Sea had reason to apprehend a speedy renewal of their visit."

And indeed their visit was repeated the very next year. "On August the 23d, 1683," says William Dampier, who had not had enough of his first expedition, "we sailed from Virginia, under the command of Captain Cook, bound for the South Seas." Their adventurous, dangerous mode of life must have had strong charms for them, for besides Dampier and Cook, Lionel Wafer, Edward Davis, and Ambrose Cowley, went for the second time, and indeed nearly all of their crew, amounting to about seventy men, were old buccaneers.

Their ship was called the *Revenge*, and mounted eighteen guns: an immense superiority over the craft with which they had already scoured those seas, and which had not even a single large gun on board.

Quite enough has been said to give the reader a notion of the mode of proceeding and living of these marauders. Without including an account of the discoveries they made in the South Sea, and the additions Dampier and Wafer procured to our knowledge of the natural history of those parts of the globe, and of the manners and habits of the savages who inhabited them, a continuation of the narrative of the buccaneers would

be monotonous; and to include these would occupy too much space, and not be germane to a work like the present. I will, therefore, mention only a few particulars, and hasten to the extinction of these extraordinary associations.

When the *Revenge* got into the South Sea, they were surprised to find another English ship there. This ship had been fitted out in the river Thames, under a pretence of trading, but with the intention of making a piratical voyage. Her commander was one John Eaton, who readily agreed to keep company with Cook. Cook died in July, just as they made Cape Blanco, and Edward Davis, the second in command, was unanimously elected to succeed him. This man, though a buccaneer, had many good and some great qualities. Humane himself, he repressed the ferocity of his companions; he was prudent, moderate, and steady; and such was his commanding character, and the confidence his worth and talent inspired, that no rival authority was ever set up against him, but the lawless and capricious freebooters obeyed him implicitly in all that he ordered. For a long while he maintained his sway, not only over the two ships already mentioned, but over another English vessel, and over two hundred French, and eighty English buccaneers that crossed the isthmus of Darien, and joined him, besides other parties, that went from time to time to try their fortunes in the South Seas.

By far the most interesting incident in the history of these marauders is found in this their second expedition in the Pacific. On their first cruise, when under the command of Watling, the buccaneers having been suddenly scared away from the uninhabited island of Juan Fernandez by the appearance of three armed Spanish ships, left behind them one William, an Indian of the

Mosquito tribe, whose attachment to the English adventurers has been mentioned. The poor fellow was absent in the woods, hunting goats for food for the buccaneers at the time of the alarm, and they could spare no time to search after him. When this second expedition came near Juan Fernandez, on March 22d, 1684, several of the buccaneers who had been with Watling, and were still attached to their faithful Indian comrade William, were eager to discover if any traces could be found of him on the island, and accordingly made for it in great haste in a row-boat.

In this boat was Dampier, who, marauder though he was, has described the scene with exquisite simplicity and feeling, and Robin a Mosquito Indian. As they approached the shore, to their astonishment and delight they saw William at the seaside waiting to receive them.

“Robin, his countryman,” says Dampier, “was the first who leaped ashore from the boat, and running to his brother Mosquito man, threw himself flat on his face at his feet, who helping him up and embracing him, fell flat with his face on the ground at Robin’s feet, and was by him taken up also. We stood with pleasure to behold the surprise, tenderness, and solemnity of this interview, which was exceedingly affectionate on both sides; and when their ceremonies were over, we, also, that stood gazing at them, drew near, each of us embracing him we had found here, who was overjoyed to see so many of his old friends come hither, as he thought, purposely to fetch him.”

William had by this time lived in utter solitude for more than three years. The Spaniards knew that he had been left behind at the island, and several ships of that nation had stopped there and sent people in pursuit of him, but he, dreading they would put him to death

as an ally of their persecutors, the English buccaneers, had each time fled and succeeded in concealing himself from their search.

When his friends first sailed away and left him at Juan Fernandez, William had with him a musket, a small horn of powder, a few shot, and a knife. "When his ammunition was expended," continues Dampier, "he contrived, by notching his knife, to saw the barrel of his gun into small pieces, wherewith he made harpoons, lances, hooks, and a long knife, heating the pieces of iron first in the fire, and then hammering them out as he pleased with stones. This may seem strange to those not acquainted with the sagacity of the Indians; but it is no more than what the Mosquito men were accustomed to in their own country." He had worn out the English clothes with which he had landed, and now had no covering save a goatskin round his waist. For fishing, he made lines from sealskins cut into thongs. "He had built himself a hut, half a mile from the seashore, which he lined with goatskins, and slept on his couch or *barbecu* of sticks raised about two feet from the ground, and spread with goatskins." He saw the buccaneers' ships the day before, and with his quick sight perceived at a great distance, that from their rigging and manner of manœuvring they must be English; he therefore killed three goats, which he dressed with vegetables, and when his friends and liberators landed he had a feast ready prepared for them.

After having cruised for four years, Davis and many of his companions returned to the West Indies in 1688, in time to benefit by a proclamation offering the king's pardon to all buccaneers who would claim it and quit their lawless way of life. "It was not," says Captain Burney, "the least of fortune's favours to this crew, that they should find it in their power, without any care

or forethought of their own, to terminate a long course of piratical adventures in quietness and security."

By a short time after the return of Davis, all the buccaneers, both French and English, had quitted the South Sea, most of them having effected a retreat across the isthmus, in which they met with some most desperate adventures. They continued their depredations for a few years longer in the West Indian seas, and on the coasts of the Spanish main, but they never returned to the Pacific.

On the accession of William III. a war between Great Britain and France, that had been an unusually long time at peace with each other, seemed inevitable. The French in the West Indies did not wait for its declaration, but attacked the English portion of St. Christopher, which island, by joint agreement, had been made the original and confederated settlement of the two nations. The English were forced to retire to the island of St. Nevis. The war between France and England, which followed, lasted till nearly the end of William's reign. The old ties of amity were rent asunder, and the buccaneers, who had been so long leagued against the Spaniards, now carried arms against each other, the French acting as auxiliaries to the regular forces of their nation, the English fighting under the royal flag of theirs. They never again confederated in any buccaneer cause. Had they been always united and properly headed—had conquest and not plunder been their object, they might gradually have obtained possession of a great part of the West Indies—they might at once have established an independent state among the islands of the Pacific ocean.

The treaty of Ryswick, which was signed in September 1697, and the views of the English and French cabinets as regarded Spain, and then, four years later, the accession of a Bourbon prince to the Spanish throne, led

to the final suppression of these marauders. Many of them turned planters or negro drivers, or followed their profession of sailors on board of merchant vessels; but others, who had good cruising ships, quitted the West Indies, separately, and went roving to different parts of the globe. "Their distinctive mark, which they undeviatingly preserved nearly two centuries, was their waging constant war against the Spaniards, and against them only."—Now this was obliterated, and they no longer existed as buccaneers.

I conclude with the words of Captain Burney, in which will be found a melancholy truth, but which, I hope, from the amelioration of our colonial governments and our general improvement, will soon, as regards Englishmen and present times, appear like a falsehood.

"In the history of so much robbery and outrage, the rapacity shown in some instances by the European governments in their West Indian transactions, and by governors of their appointment, appears in a worse light than that of the buccaneers, from whom, they being professed ruffians, nothing better was expected. The superior attainments of Europeans, though they have done much towards their own civilisation, chiefly in humanising their institutions, have, in their dealings with the inhabitants of the rest of the globe, with few exceptions, been made the instruments of usurpation and extortion.

"After the suppression of the buccaneers, and partly from their relics, arose a race of pirates of a more desperate cast, so rendered by the increased danger of their occupation, who for a number of years preyed upon the commerce of all nations, till they were hunted down, and, it may be said, exterminated."

All my readers will remember that there has been a doubt expressed, whether or not a dignitary of the Eng-

lish church had not been in early life a buccaneer and a robber. I say all will remember it, because Lord Byron alluded to the circumstance in a note to "The Corsair," one of the finest of his poems.

As, however, the passage is short as it is curious, I will quote it here.

"In Noble's continuation of Granger's Biographical History there is a singular passage in his account of Archbishop Blackbourne; and as in some measure connected with the profession of the hero of the foregoing poem, I cannot resist the temptation of extracting it.— 'There is something mysterious in the history and character of Dr. Blackbourne. The former is but imperfectly known; and report has even asserted he was a buccaneer; and that one of his brethren in that profession having asked, on his arrival in England, what had become of his old chum, Blackbourne, was answered, he is archbishop of York. We are informed, that Blackbourne was installed sub-dean of Exeter in 1694, which office he resigned in 1702; but after his successor Lewis Barnet's death, in 1704, he regained it. In the following year he became dean; and in 1714 held with it the archdeanery of Cornwall. He was consecrated bishop of Exeter, February 24, 1716; and translated to York, November 28, 1724, as a reward, according to court scandal, for uniting George I. to the Duchess of Munster. This, however, appears to have been an unfounded calumny. As archbishop he behaved with great prudence, and was equally respectable as the guardian of the revenues of the see. Rumour whispered he retained the vices of his youth, and that a passion for the fair sex formed an item in the list of his weaknesses; but so far from being convicted by seventy witnesses, he does not appear to have been directly criminated by one. In short, I look upon these aspersions as the effects of mere malice. How is it

possible a buccaneer should have been so good a scholar as Blackbourne certainly was? He who had so perfect a knowledge of the classics (particularly of the Greek tragedians,) as to be able to read them with the same ease as he could Shakspeare, must have taken great pains to acquire the learned languages, and have had both leisure and good masters. But he was undoubtedly educated at Christ church college, Oxford.' " These arguments do not appear to me to be very conclusive. Dampier, Lionel Wafer, Sharp, and others of the buccaneers, were men of considerable education. From their acquirements to the classical accomplishments of Blackbourne is indeed a step, but still it is only a question of degree, and in associations where there were such civilised men as they, there might be one still more cultivated, like Blackbourne. I have no anxiety to prove the identity of a robber and a bishop, but think there can be nothing so very improbable in the story, that a wild youth, even though educated at "Christ church college, Oxford," should have been a buccaneer in the West Indies, and then have returned, and, after a dubious reformation of his morals, have attained high church preferment, by his talents, his intrigues, or by a fortunate patronage. " "He is allowed to have been a pleasant man; this, however, was turned against him, by its being said, he gained more hearts than souls.' "

Mr. Mac Farlane having, in the preceding narrations, confined himself to a particular class of American buccaneers, we have prepared the following brief notices of Captain Blackbeard and Kid, who were long the terror

of the American colonists, and give them in place of some familiar and less exciting relations, which have been omitted.

Mr. Watson, the annalist of Philadelphia, bears ample testimony that the legends of the pirates were of deep interest in the time of our forefathers; so much so, that the echo of their recitals, far as we are removed from their effects, has not ceased to vibrate upon our ears. The annalist had not access to the "History of the Pirates," from which we have drawn our information, but he has inserted some particulars relative to their appearance in this city and neighbourhood which deserve a place here. He says—

"Mrs. Bulah Coates, (once Jacquet,) the grandmother of Samuel Coates, Esq. now an aged citizen, told him that she had seen and sold goods to the celebrated Blackbeard, she then keeping a store in High street, No. 77, where Beninghove now owns and dwells—a little west of Second street. He bought freely and paid well. She then knew it was him, and so did some others. But they were afraid to arrest him lest his crew, when they should hear of it, should avenge his cause, by some midnight assault. He was too politic to bring his vessel or crew within immediate reach; and at the same time was careful to give no direct offence in any of the settlements where they wished to be regarded as visiters and purchasers, &c.

"Blackbeard was also seen at sea by the mother of the late Dr. Hugh Williamson of New York; she was then in her youth coming to this country, and their vessel was captured by him. The very aged John Hutton, who died in Philadelphia in 1792, well remembered to have seen Blackbeard at Barbadoes after he had come in under the act of oblivion. This was but shortly before he made his last cruise, and was killed in 1718. The present aged

Benjamin Kite has told me, that he had seen in his youth an old black man, nearly one hundred years of age, who had been one of Blackbeard's pirates, by impressment. He lived many years with George Gray's family, the brewer in Chestnut street, near to Third street. The same Mr. Kite's grandfather told him he well knew one Crane, a Swede, at the upper ferry on Schuylkill, who used to go regularly in his boat to supply Blackbeard's vessel at State Island. He also said it was known that that freebooter used to visit an inn in High street, near to Second street, with his sword by his side. There is a traditionary story, that Blackbeard and his crew used to visit and revel at Marcushook, at the house of a Swedish woman, whom he was accustomed to call Marcus, as an abbreviation of Margaret.

"How long Blackbeard exercised his piracies before the years 1717 and '18, which terminated his profligate career, I am not enabled to say, but in this time the MS. papers in the Logan collection make frequent mention of him and others, as in that hateful pursuit.

"In 1717, James Logan writes, saying, 'We have been extremely pestered with pirates who now swarm in America, and increase their numbers by almost every vessel they take—[compelling them to enter by coercion or otherwise.] If speedy care be not taken they will become formidable, being now at least fifteen hundred strong. They have very particularly talked of visiting this place; many of them being well acquainted with it, and some born in it, for they are generally all English, and therefore know that our government can make no defence.'

"In October, 1718, James Logan again writes to Colonel Hunter, the governor of New York, by express, saying, 'We are now sending down a small vessel to seize those rogues, if not strengthened from sea. We are in

manifest danger here, unless the king's ships (which seem careless of the matter) take some notice of us; they probably think a proprietary government no part of their charge. It is possible, indeed, that the merchants of New York, some of them I mean, might not be displeased to hear we are all reduced to ashes. [Even so early it seems there were jealousies of trade!] Unless these pirates be deterred from coming up our rivers by the fear of men of war outside to block them in, there is nothing but what we may fear from them, for that unhappy pardon [the same Teach before embraced,] has given them a settled correspondence every where, and an opportunity [mark this] of lodging their friends where they please to come to their assistance; and no where in America, [mark this!] I believe, so much as in this town.'

"Such was the picture of piracy which once distressed and alarmed our forefathers, and shows in itself much of the cause of the numerous vague tales we still occasionally hear of Blackbeard and the pirates."

From a very scarce book now before us, entitled "A General History of the Pyrates, from their first rise and settlement in the Island of Providence to the present time, by Charles Johnson, 4th edition, London, 1726," which was evidently prepared with constant reference to authentic documents, we have collected the following particulars.

BLACKBEARD.

Edward Teach, better known by the name of BLACKBEARD, was born in Bristol, England, and for a considerable period was engaged in privateering from the Island of Jamaica. He acted as a private sailor till the year

1716, when a Captain Hornigold, a noted pirate, raised him to the command of a sloop he had made prize of. He continued in company with Hornigold until the latter was captured. In the spring of 1717 they sailed together from the Island of Providence for the American colonies, and took in their way a vessel from Havana, which they plundered, and a sloop from Bermuda, from which they took only a few gallons of wine, and dismissed her. They also captured a ship from Madeira, bound to South Carolina, from which they got considerable plunder.

After cleaning their vessel on the coast of Virginia, they started for the West Indies, and on the voyage made prize of a large French Guineaman. After various cruises they were shipwrecked on the coast of North Carolina, when Teach, hearing of a proclamation by which all pirates who surrendered were to be pardoned, went with twenty of his men to the governor of that state, and received certificates of having complied with its terms. But it does not appear that their submission was from any reformation, but only to gain time to prepare for a renewal of their deeds of iniquity. An opportunity soon presented, with a fair prospect of success, Teach having in the interim cultivated a good understanding with Charles Eden, the governor above mentioned. He had brought in, some time before, a merchantman, of which, says Johnson, Eden contrived to give him possession, through a packed vice-admiralty court, held at Bath Town, though it was notorious that he had never held a commission in his life, and that the vessel in question belonging to English merchants had been taken in time of peace. Before Teach sailed he married a girl of about sixteen, the governor performing the ceremony—this, it is said, made his fourteenth wife! What acts of piracy he committed on this voyage we have no data for ascertaining.

In June 1718, he steered his course for Bermuda, and met two or three English vessels, which he robbed of provisions, stores, and other necessities. When near Bermuda, he fell in with two French ships; one of them was loaded with sugar and cocoa, and the other in ballast; the latter he dismissed, with both crews on board; the other he brought to North Carolina, where the governor and the pirates shared the plunder. Teach and his officers having made affidavit that they found their prize at sea, without a soul on board, the governor's obedient court condemned her—his excellency having sixty hogsheads of sugar for his dividend, and his secretary, Mr. Knight, one; the collector for the province received twenty.

But this affair was not yet completed; the ship remained, and it was possible somebody might come into the river who would recognise her, and thus discover their villany. Teach, thinking it would be most prudent to destroy her, under pretence that she was in a leaky condition, and by sinking would destroy the entrance to the harbour, procured an order from the governor to set her on fire, which was accordingly done. She was burnt to the water's edge, her hull sunk, and with it their fears of her ever rising in judgment against them disappeared.

Blackbeard now entered on a petty course of piracy, infesting the whole colonial coast, but more particularly the waters of Virginia and the Delaware. In November, 1718, Governor Spotswood of Virginia offered a reward for Teach, dead or alive, of one hundred pounds; for every other commander of a pirate ship, forty pounds; for inferior officers, from fifteen to twenty pounds; and for every private, ten pounds.

On the 17th of the same month, Lieutenant Maynard sailed from Kicquetan, in James river, in search of

Blackbeard. On the 31st, in the evening, he came to the mouth of Ocracock inlet, where he got sight of the pirate. This expedition was managed with the greatest secrecy, the officer prudently stopping all boats and vessels he met with in the river, to prevent any intelligence reaching the outlaws. But, notwithstanding this caution, Blackbeard had information of the design from Governor Eden, his secretary, Mr. Knight, having written him a letter, with the information that he had sent him four of his men, who were all he could muster, reminding him to be on his guard. The pirate, having frequently before been falsely alarmed, paid little attention to the advice, nor was he fully aware of the expedition till he actually saw the sloops. He immediately put his vessel in a state of defence. Having but about twenty-five men on board, he told them to sell their lives dearly, and then sat down to a drinking frolic with the master of a trading sloop, who it was suspected was rather too intimate with the pirate for his own credit.

Lieutenant Maynard came to anchor in front of the inlet, but in the morning weighed, and sent his boats ahead of the sloops to sound. On coming within gun-shot of the pirates, he received their fire, and hoisting the king's colours, stood directly for the enemy, when Blackbeard cut his cable, and endeavoured to make a running fight, keeping up a continued fire with his guns, which Maynard could only answer with small arms, the shallowness of the navigation precluding their carrying cannon. In a little time Teach's sloop ran aground, but the lieutenant's drawing more water he could not come near him, and therefore anchored within gun-shot. In order to lighten the vessel, so as to run him aboard, Maynard threw over all the ballast and water, weighed, and stood for the pirate. Blackbeard hailed him with an oath, and demanded who they were and whence they came.

The Lieutenant made answer, " You see by our colours that we are no pirates." Blackbeard ordered him to send a boat aboard, that he might see who he was, but he was answered that they could not spare the boat, but would come aboard with the sloop as soon as they could. The pirate took a glass of liquor, and drinking to his opponent, swore he would neither give nor receive quarters; Maynard replied, he expected none, nor would he give any.

By this time, Blackbeard's vessel made an attempt to escape as the sloops were rowing towards him, and he fired a broadside, charged, says the historian, " with all manner of small shots." The deck of Maynard's vessel being unprotected, twenty of his men were either killed or wounded, but the crew still kept to their oars, determined on capture. Fearing another broadside, the lieutenant ordered all the men below, except the helmsman, who, with himself, solely occupied the deck. The helmsman was ordered to lay close, and the hands below had received previous orders to be instantly ready on a given signal. When the two vessels came in contact, Teach's men threw case-bottles on board of Maynard's, filled with powder and small shot, slugs, and pieces of lead or iron, with a lighted match in the mouth. Exploding on the deck, they would have done great execution, if the men had not been in safety in the hold. Blackbeard, seeing few or none of the hands, told his men that they were all killed, except three or four, and proposed to jump aboard, and cut them to pieces. No sooner said than done; under the smoke of one of the exploded case-bottles, he sprang on deck, followed by fourteen men, who were not perceived by Maynard till the smoke had somewhat cleared off. The signal being given, in a moment the two parties were engaged in deadly combat, Blackbeard and the lieutenant firing the

first shots at each other, by which the pirate received a wound. They then engaged at arms' length with swords, till the lieutenant's weapon unluckily broke, when, stepping back to cock a pistol, Blackbeard raised his cutlass, and was in the act of striking, when one of Maynard's men gave him a terrible wound in the neck and throat, Maynard receiving only a small cut over his fingers.

The parties were now closely and warmly engaged, the lieutenant and twelve men against Blackbeard and fourteen, "till the sea was tinctured with blood round the vessel." Blackbeard received a shot in his body from Maynard's pistol, but still stood his ground, fighting with great fury, till he had received twenty-five wounds, five of them by shot. At length, as he was cocking another pistol, having already fired several, he fell dead on the deck. Eight of his men shared the same fate, and the others, much wounded, jumped overboard, and called out for quarters, which was granted, though it was only prolonging their lives a few days. The second sloop under Maynard's command, which had been aground, now came up, and attacked the men in Blackbeard's vessel who had not boarded, and came off equally victorious.

Here was an end to the great terror of the colonies, and of a wretch, who, had he been employed in a good cause, might have passed for a hero. Lieutenant Maynard deserved great praise for his bravery in following such a desperado with very small vessels, whose draught would not admit of their carrying either ordnance or a sufficient numerical force.

When they got possession of the piratical vessel, they found a negro with a lighted match in the powder room, waiting for commands to blow all up, which were to have been given if Maynard and his men should enter and seem likely to prove victorious; the intention having been to destroy the conquerors with themselves, and from

this they were only saved by the prudent precaution of the commander in keeping his men in the hold till the pirates left their own vessel. The negro, when he found how things were going, could scarcely be persuaded from setting fire to the powder.

The lieutenant caused Blackbeard's head to be severed from his body, and hanging it up at the boltsprit head, sailed for Bath Town, to procure surgical aid for his wounded men. In rummaging the pirates' sloop, several letters were found which discovered their correspondence with Governor Eden's secretary, of which the following is a copy, preserved in Williamson's History of North Carolina.

“ November 17, 1717.

“ My friend—

“ If this finds you in the harbour, I would have you make the best of your way up as soon as possible your affairs will let you. I have something more to say to you than at present I can write. The bearer will tell you the end of our Indian war, and Ganet can tell you in part what I have to say to you, so refer you in some measure to him.

“ I really think those three men are heartily sorry at their difference with you, and will be very willing to ask your pardon. If I may advise, be friends again; its better so than falling out among yourselves. I expect the governor this night or to-morrow, who I believe would be likewise glad to see you before you go. I have not time to add, save my hearty respects to you, and am your real friend,

“ T. KNIGHT.”

Some traders in New York were also implicated by the letters found on board.

When the lieutenant came to Bath Town, he seized

the governor's store-house, and his sixty hogsheads of sugar, as well as honest Mr. Knight's. The latter did not long survive this discovery; being apprehensive he might be called to account, he became ill with fright, and died in a few days.

After the wounded men had recovered, the lieutenant sailed back to James river, with Blackbeard's head still at the boltsprit head, having on board fifteen prisoners, thirteen of whom were afterwards hanged. It appearing on trial that one of them, Samuel Odell, was taken out of the trading sloop only the night before the engagement, he was pardoned. Odell had no less than seventy wounds in various parts of the body, notwithstanding which he lived and was cured of them all. The other person who escaped the gallows was named Israel Hands. He happened not to have been in the fight, but was taken afterwards ashore, at Bath Town, having been some time before disabled by Blackbeard in the following manner. One night, when drinking in his cabin with Hands, the pilot, and another individual, Blackbeard, without any provocation, privately drew out a small pair of pistols, and, blowing out the candle, discharged them at his company. Hands was shot through the knee, and lamed for life; the other pistol did no execution. Blackbeard being asked the meaning of this, coolly answered with an oath, that if he did not now and then kill one of them, they would forget who he was. Hands being taken, was tried and condemned, but pleaded his majesty's pardon, and by some juggling escaped with his life.

Teach owed his nickname of Blackbeard to the extraordinary quantity of hair with which his head and face were covered. His beard was of a jet black, in full keeping with his black or bloody flag, and suffered to grow to an extravagant length. It came entirely up to his eyes, and he was in the habit of twisting it with ribbons

into small tails, and turning them up about his ears. In time of action he wore a sling over his shoulders, with three brace of pistols, hanging in holsters; and still further to render his horrible countenance terrific, he stuck lighted matches under his hat, which appearing on each side of his face, his eyes naturally looking fierce and wild, made him appear altogether like a demon. His disposition corresponded to his appearance, a more reckless wretch having rarely graced the annals of piracy. He appeared desirous to impress his followers with the belief that he was a devil incarnate. On one occasion, when intoxicated, he proposed to his followers to make a little hell of their own, and see how long it could be borne. Accordingly, three or four of them descended to the hold, and closing up all the hatches, filled several pots with brimstone, and then set it on fire. They bore the effluvia as long as possible, but being nearly suffocated two of the men called out for air, and after some time their commander opened the hatches, not a little pleased that he had held out the longest. Sitting up with his comrades the night previous to his death, one of them asked him, in case he was killed, whether his wife knew where he had buried his money. He answered, that "nobody but himself and old Nick knew where it was." An idea long prevailed, and still exists, for aught we know, in various parts of the neighbouring states, that Blackbeard had deposited pots of money in various secure places. The writer has met with more than one instance of positive belief in these idle stories, and his friend, Mr. Watson, in his very amusing book, says—

"The conceit was, that sometimes they killed a prisoner, and interred him with it, to make his ghost keep his vigils there as a guard 'walking his weary round.' Hence it was not rare to hear of persons having seen a shpook or ghost, or of having dreamed of it a plurality

of times; thus creating a sufficient incentive to dig on the spot.

“ Dream after dream ensues;
And still they dream that they shall still succeed,
And still are disappointed !”

“ Colonel Thomas Forrest, who died in 1828, at the age of 83, had been in his early days a youth of much frolic and fun, always well disposed to give time and application to forward a joke. He found much to amuse himself in the credulity of some of the German families. I have heard him relate some of his anecdotes of the prestigious kind with much humour. When he was about twenty-one years of age, a tailor who was measuring him for a suit of clothes happened to say, ‘ Now, Thomas, if you and I could only find some of the money of the sea-robbers, (the pirates,) we might drive our coach for life !’ The sincerity and simplicity with which he uttered this, caught the attention of young Forrest, and when he went home he began to devise some scheme to be amused with his credulity and superstition. There was a prevailing belief that the pirates had hidden many sums of money and much of treasure about the banks of the Delaware. Forrest got an old parchment, on which he wrote the dying testimony of one John Hendricks, executed at Tyburn for piracy, in which he stated he had deposited a chest and a pot of money at Cooper’s Point, in the Jerseys. This parchment he smoked, and gave to it the appearance of antiquity; calling on his German tailor, told him he had found it among his father’s papers, who got it in England from the prisoner whom he visited in prison. This he showed to the tailor as a precious paper, which he could by no means lend out of his hands. This operated the desired effect.

“ Soon after, the tailor called on Forrest with one Ambruster, a printer, who he introduced as capable of ‘ print-

ing any spirit out of hell,' by his knowledge of the black art. He asked to see the parchment; he was delighted with it, and confidently said he could conjure Hendricks to give up the money. A time was appointed to meet in an upper room of a public house in Philadelphia, by night, and the innkeeper was let into the secret by Forrest. By the night appointed, they had prepared by a closet a communication with a room above their sitting room, so as to lower down by a pulley the invoked ghost, who was represented by a young man entirely sewed up in a close white dress, on which were painted black-eyed sockets, mouth, and bare ribs with dashes of black between them, the outside and inside of the legs and thighs blacked, so as to make white bones conspicuous. About twelve persons met in all, seated around a table. Ambruster shuffled and read out cards, on which were inscribed the names of saints, telling them he should bring Hendricks to encompass the table, visible or invisible he could not tell. At the words, John Hendricks '*du verfluchter cum heraus,*' the pulley was heard to reel, the closet door to fly open, and John Hendricks, with ghastly appearance, to stand forth. The whole were dismayed and fled, save Forrest the brave. After this, Ambruster, on whom they all depended, declared that he had by spells got permission to take up the money. A day was therefore appointed to visit the Jersey shore, and to dig there by night. The parchment said it lay between two great stones. Forrest, therefore, prepared two black men, to be entirely naked, except white petticoat-breeches; and these were to jump each on the stone whenever they came to the pot, which had been previously put there. These frightened off the company for a little. When they next essayed, they were assailed by cats, tied two and two, to whose tails were spiral papers of gunpowder, which illuminated and whizzed, while the cats whawled.

The pot was at length got up, and brought in great triumph to Philadelphia wharf: but oh, sad disaster! while helping it out of the boat, Forrest, who managed it, and was handing it up to the tailor, trod upon the gunnel and filled the boat, and, holding on to the pot, dragged the tailor into the river—it was lost! For years afterwards, they reproached Forrest for that loss, and declared he had got the chest by himself, and was enriched thereby. He favoured the conceit, until at last they actually sued him on a writ of treasure trove; but their lawyer was persuaded to give it up as idle. Some years afterwards, Mr. Forrest wrote a very humorous play, (which I have seen printed, and a copy of it is now in the Philadelphia Athenæum,) which contained many incidents of this kind of superstition. It gave such offence to the parties represented, that it could not be exhibited on the stage. I remember some lines in it, for it had much of broken English and German-English verses, to wit:

“ My dearest wife, in all my life,
Ich neber was so frighten'd,
De spirit come and I did run
'Twas juste like tunder mit lightening.”

“Several aged persons have occasionally pointed out to me the places where persons to their knowledge, had dug for pirates' money. The small hill once on the north side of Coates street, near to Front street, was well remembered by John Brown as having been much dug. Colonel A. J. Morris, now in his ninetieth year, has told me, that in his early days very much was said of Black-beard and the pirates, both by young and old. Tales were frequently current that this and that person had heard of some of his discovered treasure. Persons in the city were named as having profited by his depredations. But he thought those things were not true.

"As late as the year 1792, the shipcarpenters formed a party to dig for pirates' money on the Cohocksinc creek, northwest of the causeway, under a large tree. They got frightened off. And it came out afterwards, that a waggish neighbour had enacted *diabolus* to their discomfiture."

Smith, the historian of New York, remarks—"It is certain, that the pirates were frequently in the Sound, and supplied with provisions by the inhabitants of Long Island, who, for many years afterwards, were so infatuated with a notion that the pirates buried great quantities of money along the coast, that there is scarcely a point of land, or an island, without the marks of their *auri sacri fames*. Some credulous people have ruined themselves by these researches, and propagated a thousand idle fables, current to this day, among our country farmers." To prove the fallacy of these stories no argument is necessary; Williamson states that Blackbeard's "treasures, which vulgar credulity, prone to believe a wonderful story, had passed to his account, were of no use to himself at least. The man who is said and believed to have buried pots or chests of money, in every deep creek along our coasts, had not the means of supporting himself on shore when he left off cruising."

Johnson has one more anecdote of this famous freebooter, with which he closes his annals of Captain Teach. Those of his crew who were taken alive, told a story in which they placed implicit reliance,—that when out upon a cruise, they discovered there was one man on board more than their complement. He was seen for several days among them—sometimes upon deck, and sometimes below—but was entirely unknown to any of the hands, and disappeared suddenly, without any one's knowledge. This individual these superstitious and ignorant wretches firmly believed was the devil!

CAPTAIN KID.

Captain Kid's piracies are of an earlier date than Blackbeard's, and, being carried on at a greater distance from our shores, excited less attention among the mass of the people. From Johnson's history, and other sources, the following facts have been collected.

It appears, that before the Earl of Bellamont sailed to take command as governor of the provinces of Massachusetts Bay and New Hampshire, in 1698, he became acquainted with Robert Livingston, Esq. the ancestor of the present Livingstons of New York, who was then in England, prosecuting his own affairs before the Council. The earl took occasion to mention to Mr. Livingston the scandal which attached to the province on account of the pirates. The latter confessed the reports in circulation were well founded, and introduced the earl to Captain Kid, whom he recommended as a man of integrity and courage, well acquainted with the pirates and their rendezvous, and who would undertake to apprehend them, if the king would employ a good sailing frigate of thirty guns and one hundred and fifty men. Bellamont laid the proposal before the king, who consulted the admiralty upon the subject; this project was, however, dropped, and Mr. Livingston then proposed a private adventure against the pirates, offering to be concerned with Kid to the amount of one fifth of the cost of outfit, and to be himself responsible for Kid's faithful execution of the commission. The king then gave his approval to the plan, and reserved to himself a tenth share, to show that he was concerned in the enterprise. Lord Chancellor Somers, and others of high standing, joined in the scheme, agreeing to make up a sum of six thousand pounds, leaving the management of the whole affair to

Lord Bellamont, who gave orders to Kid to pursue his commission, which was in the usual form.

Kid sailed from Plymouth for New York, in April, 1696, bearing also a commission, to justify him in taking French merchant ships, King William being then at war with that nation. His vessel, the *Adventure Galley*, carried thirty guns and eighty men; on the voyage they captured a French "Banker," and, arriving at New York, Kid advertised for more men, offering every one who joined a share of what should be taken. His company was thus increased to one hundred and fifty men, with which crew he sailed, first for Madeira, where he took in wine and other articles, and proceeded to Bonavista, to procure salt. He now bent his course to Madagascar, the known rendezvous of pirates, where he arrived in February, 1697.

The pirates were most of them out in search of prey, so that according to the best information Kid could obtain, there were none of their vessels about the island. After watering and taking in provisions Kid steered for the coast of Malabar, and made an unsuccessful cruise. It does not appear that, up to this period, he had any design of turning buccaneer himself, for on the last named voyage he fell in with several India ships, richly laden, to which he offered no violence, though his crew was numerous enough to have captured the whole; he soon, however, began to open his views to the men, by informing them that the Mocha fleet, which was to set sail shortly, would make their fortunes. Finding that none of them made any objection, he ordered a boat out, well manned, to go on the coast to make discoveries, commanding them to take a prisoner and bring him aboard, or procure intelligence by any other method. The boat returned in a few days, bringing him word that they saw

fourteen or fifteen ships ready to sail, some with Dutch and others with Moorish flags.

Kid must have determined to turn pirate in consequence of his disappointments and apprehensions lest his owners, on discovering his want of success, should dismiss him. Whatever his motives might have been, he soon fell in with the fleet, and firing into a Moorish ship the others bore down upon him, and obliged him to sheer off; but, having commenced hostilities, he soon captured a small vessel, belonging to Moorish merchants, the master of which was an Englishman, named Parker; Kid forced him and a Portuguese, the only Europeans on board, to join his crew, the first for pilot, and the other as interpreter. He also used the men very cruelly, causing them to be hoisted up by their arms, and drubbed with a cutlass, in order to make them confess where their money was concealed, but as they had neither gold nor silver on board, he took nothing from the vessel but a little coffee and pepper.

The news of this piracy soon spread, and a Portuguese man-of-war was sent out in search of the new pirate; meeting with Kid, a savage battle was fought, in which both ships were more or less injured, and our *hero*, finding the enemy too strong for him to entertain the hope of coming off conqueror, hoisted sail and made off.

Meeting with better success soon after, Kid was seized with a fit of penitence, entertaining fears that his conduct would eventually bring him to the gallows; after overhauling a Dutch ship without committing any violence, his crew mutinied, and the dispute ended with his laying one of his men dead at his feet. His conscience does not appear to have troubled him long. Coasting along Malabar, he met a great number of boats, all of which he plundered, as well as a Portuguese ship, of which he kept possession a week, and having extracted

some cases of India goods, thirty jars of butter, with some wax, iron, and a hundred bags of rice, he let her go.

Landing on one of the Malabar islands for wood and water, his cooper was murdered by the natives, upon which Kid burnt and pillaged several of their houses. Having captured one of the islanders, he hung him to a tree, and commanded one of his men to shoot him; after which, putting to sea, he captured a Moorish ship of 400 tons, richly laden. The share of each man, after the cargo was sold, amounted to two hundred pounds, and Kid's to eight thousand, sterling. Putting some of his men on board his prize, the two set sail for Madagascar, where he fraternised with some noted pirates, supplying them with such articles as they stood in need of. Finding his galley no longer sea-worthy, he transferred his quarters to the recently captured ship, the "Queda Merchant," and was soon placed in a situation of great distress by the desertion of the principal part of his crew, who either absconded on shore or joined other captains; about forty only remaining with him. Touching at Amboyna, he was informed that the news of his piracies had reached England, and that he was there declared a pirate, a motion having been made in the House of Commons to enquire into the conduct of the parties who had fitted out the expedition, and even for their expulsion from their places; this however was rejected by a large majority. Some of them were afterwards impeached, but acquitted, and Lord Bellamont published a pamphlet justifying himself from the aspersions cast upon his character. A proclamation had been published, offering the king's free pardon to all such pirates as should surrender themselves before the last day of April, 1699; in this, however, Avery and Kid were excepted by name.

When Kid left Amboyna, he could have known nothing of this exception, or he would not have been so infatuated

as to have run himself into the meshes of his enemies. Relying upon his interest with Lord Bellamont, and believing that a French pass or two he had found on board some of the ships he had taken, would hush up the affair, while his booty would gain him new friends, he sailed directly for New York, where he no sooner landed, than the whole company was arrested by Lord B.'s orders, together with their papers and effects. At first they were admitted to bail, but were afterwards put in strict confinement, and finally sent to England for trial.

At an admiralty sessions, held at the Old Bailey in 1701, Captain Kid, Nicholas Churchill, James Howe, Robert Lumley, William Jenkins, Gabriel Loff, Hugh Parrot, Richard Barlicorne, Abel Owens, and Darby Mullins, were arraigned for piracy and robbery on the high seas, and all found guilty, except three, Lumley, Jenkins, and Barlicorne, who, proving themselves under indentures to some officers of the ship, were acquitted. The others had availed themselves of the pardon and surrendered.

Kid was also tried for murder and found guilty, though he plead his own innocence and the villany of his men, declaring that he went out in a laudable employment; that the men often mutinied, and did as they pleased; that he was threatened to be shot in his cabin, and that ninety-five left him at one time, and set fire to his boat, so that he was prevented from bringing his ship home, or the prizes he took, to have them regularly condemned. He called a witness to prove his good character and bravery, but the evidence against him being full and particular, about a week afterwards he and his companions were executed at Execution Dock, and afterwards hung up in chains at some distance from each other, where their bodies were exposed for many years.

Mr. Watson has preserved the "Ballad of Captain

Kid, a great rarity in the present day, although the pensive tones are still known to some." As a curiosity in its way we here insert it; the tune was the same as that of the eccentric song, "Farewell, ye blooming youth," &c.

My name was Captain Kid,
When I sail'd, when I sail'd,
My name was Captain Kid,
And so wickedly I did,
God's laws I did forbid,
When I sail'd, when I sail'd.

I roam'd from sound to sound,
And many a ship I found,
And them I sunk or burn'd,
When I sail'd, when I sail'd.

I murdered William Moore,
And laid him in his gore,
Not many leagues from shore,
When I sail'd, when I sail'd.

Farewell to young and old,
All jolly seamen bold;
You're welcome to my gold,
For I must die, I must die.

Farewell to Lunnon town,
The pretty girls all round;
No pardon can be found,
And I must die, I must die.

Farewell, for I must die,
Then to eternity,
In hideous misery,
I must lie, I must lie.

The foregoing abridgments of the lives of two celebrated sea rovers, have been rendered as short as possible. In the appendix to his 4th edition, Johnson expresses some doubt as to the culpability of Governor Eden, but the letter from his secretary, previously quoted, and other corroborating circumstances, have left a suspicion upon his character which will not easily be effaced. As this is a curious piece of colonial history but rarely referred to, we may add, that Dr. Williamson, author of the *History of South Carolina*, appears to give full credit to the story, stating, that "Eden's administration was chequered by trouble, and clouded by disgrace, that he might and should have prevented—His conduct," he continues, "when viewed in the most favourable light, was very imprudent, although his guilt was not fully established."

Another governor, Robert Quarry, of South Carolina, was degraded, in 1681, for harbouring pirates, and the character of Fletcher, the resident governor of New York before the appointment of Lord Bellamont, was also stained with the same reproach, having been strongly suspected of confederating with Kid and his associates. When that pirate was secured, it was discovered that Nicoll, a member of the governor's council, had received bribes for granting protections to pirates who frequented the Sound. Lord Bellamont's council advised that Fletcher should be sent to England, to be tried for piracy; and that Nicoll should be tried in the colony, but, according to Smith's *History of New York*, their advice was never carried into execution, probably owing to a want of evidence against the parties.

MARY READ AND ANNE BONNEY.

Two female pirates named Mary Read and Anne Bonney being frequently mentioned incidentally by histo-

rians, the following particulars of them may be worth preserving. The first, Mary Read, was an officer's widow, who assumed the dress of a man, and shipped as a sailor, but the vessel being captured by the pirates who hailed from the island of Providence, she remained among them, and was as lawless and savage as any of their number. On her trial it was declared by her companions, that in time of action, no person on board was more resolute, or ready to board, or to undertake any thing that was hazardous, than she and Anne Bonney; that on one occasion, when they were attacked and captured, none kept the deck except these two women and a single sailor. They called to those below, to come up and fight like men; but finding they did not obey, Mary Read fired her arms down the hold, killed one of the crew and wounded several others. This charge she denied, though it would seem she was not deficient in bravery, for on one occasion she challenged one of the pirates and fought him on shore for some offence to her lover.

Johnson relates a curious anecdote of these two females; so completely was Mary Read disguised by her dress, that sailing in company with Anne Bonney, the latter actually fell in love with her.

Mary was tried and found guilty by the English courts, but died of a fever in prison.

Anne Bonney's history as related by Johnson, entitles her to a place in the annals of the most infamous of her sex. She went to sea with the piratical Captain Rackman, and bore him company in many of his expeditions, no body on board being more courageous, or ready to lend a hand in perpetrating the darkest deeds of blood. It appears she was reprieved from time to time after conviction, and was not executed, though what became of her is not known.

CHINESE PIRATES.

The celestial empire, spite of the boasted wisdom of its government, and the virtue and order that have been supposed to reign there for so many centuries, is no more free from robbers than countries of less ancient date and inferior pretension. On the contrary, if we except India, no part of the world has, in our time, witnessed such formidable and numerous associations of freebooters. These Chinese robbers were pirates, and I am disposed to give a sketch of them and their adventures, as a striking *pendant* to the preceding chapter on the Buccaneers of America; and this, because I am not only in possession of a most curious account of the suppression or pacification of the rovers, translated from the original Chinese, but of a corroboration written by an Englishman, who was so unfortunate as to fall into their hands, and to see his comrades (English sailors) obliged to take part in their marauding and murderous expeditions.

For the translation of *Yuen Tsze's* "History of the Pirates who infested the China Sea from 1807 to 1810," we are indebted to that excellent institution, the Oriental Translation Fund, and to the labours of the distinguished Orientalist, Mr. Charles Fried Neumann; and for the Narrative (first published in Wilkinson's *Travels to China*) of his captivity and treatment amongst the *Ladrones*,

(pirates,) to Richard Glasspoole, Esq. of the Hon. East India Company's service, a gentleman who is still living. I shall make out my account of the Chinese pirates from either of these two authorities.

The Ladrones, as they were christened by the Portuguese of Macao, were originally a disaffected set of Chinese, that revolted against the oppression of the Mandarines. The first scene of their depredations was the western coast, about Cochin-China, where they began by attacking small trading vessels in row boats, carrying from thirty to forty men each. They continued this system of piracy, and thrived and increased in numbers under it for several years. At length the fame of their successes, and the oppression and horrid poverty and want that many of the lower order of Chinese laboured under, had the effect of augmenting their bands with astonishing rapidity. Fishermen and other destitute classes flocked by hundreds to their standard, and their audacity growing with their numbers, they not merely swept the coast, but blockaded all the principal rivers, and attacked and took several large government war junks, mounting from ten to fifteen guns each.

These junks being added to their shoals of boats, the pirates formed a tremendous fleet, which was always along shore, so that no small vessel could safely trade on the coast. When they lacked prey on the sea, they laid the land under tribute. They were at first accustomed to go on shore and attack the maritime villages, but becoming bolder, they, like the buccancers, made long inland journeys, and surprised and plundered even large towns.

An energetic attempt made by the Chinese government to destroy them, only increased their strength; for in their very first rencounter with the pirates, twenty-eight

of the imperial junks struck, and the remaining twelve saved themselves by a precipitate retreat.

The captured junks, fully equipped for war, were a great acquisition to the robbers, whose numbers now increased more rapidly than ever. They were in their plenitude of power in the year 1809, when Mr. Glasspoole had the misfortune to fall into their hands, at which time, that gentleman supposed their force to consist of 70,000 men, navigating eight hundred large vessels, and one thousand small ones, including row boats. They were divided into six large squadrons, under different flags:—the red, the yellow, the green, the blue, the black, and the white. “These wasps of the ocean,” as the Chinese historian pertinently calls them, were further distinguished by the names of their respective commanders. Of these commanders a certain *Ching-yih* had been the most distinguished by his valour and conduct. By degrees Ching obtained almost a supremacy of command over the whole united fleet; and so confident was this robber in his strength and daily augmenting means, that he aspired to the dignity of a great political character, and went so far as openly to declare his patriotic intention of hurling the present Tartar family from the throne of China, and of restoring the ancient native Chinese dynasty.

But unfortunately for this ambitious pirate, “it happened that on the seventeenth day of the tenth moon, in the year of Kea-King,” he perished in a heavy gale, and instead of placing a sovereign on the Chinese throne, he and his lofty aspirations were buried in the sea of China. And now comes the most remarkable passage in the history of these pirates—remarkable with any class of men, but doubly so among the Chinese, who entertain more than the general oriental opinion of the inferiority, or nothingness, of the fair sex.

On the death of *Ching-yih*, his legitimate wife had sufficient influence over the freebooters to induce them to recognise her authority in the place of her deceased husband's; and she appointed one *Paou* as her lieutenant and prime minister, and provided that she should be considered the mistress or the commander in chief of the united squadrons.

This *Paou* had been a poor fisher boy, picked up with his father at sea, while fishing, by *Ching-yih*, whose good will and favour he had the fortune to captivate, and by whom, before that pirate's death, he had been made a headman or captain. The grave Chinese historian does not descend into such domestic particulars, but we may presume, from her appointing him to be her lieutenant, that *Paou* had been equally successful in securing the good graces of *Mistress Ching*, as the worthy translator somewhat irreverently styles our Chinese heroine.

Instead of declining under the rule of a woman, the pirates became more enterprising than ever. *Ching's* widow was clever as well as brave, and so was her lieutenant *Paou*. Between them they drew up a code of laws for the better regulation of their freebooters.

That the pirates might never feel the want of provisions and other supplies, it was ordered by *Ching-yih's* widow, that every thing should be done to gain the common country people to their interest. Wine, rice, and all other goods were to be paid for, as the villagers delivered them: capital punishment was pronounced on every pirate who should take any thing of this kind by force, or without paying for it. And not only were these laws well calculated for their object, but the she commander in chief and her lieutenant *Paou* were vigilant in seeing them observed, and strict in every transaction.

By these means an admirable discipline was main-

tained on board the ships, and the peasantry on shore never let the pirates want for gunpowder, provisions, or any other necessary. On a piratical expedition, either to advance or to retreat without orders, was a capital offence.

Under these philosophical institutions, and the guidance of a woman, the robbers continued to scour the China sea, plundering every vessel they came near; but it is to be remarked, in their delicate phraseology, the robbing of a ship's cargo was not called by any such vulgar term—it was merely styled “a transshipping of goods.”

After some reverses the tarnished laurels of the pirates were however brightened; for when Tsuen-mow-Sun went to attack them in the bay of Kwangchow, the widow of Ching-yih, remaining quiet with part of her ships, sent her bold lieutenant Paou to make an attack on the front of the admiral's line. When the fight was well begun, the rest of the pirate's ships, that had been lying *perdus*, came upon the admiral's rear, and presently surrounded him. “Then,” saith the historian, “our squadron was scattered, thrown into disorder, and consequently cut to pieces: there was a noise which rent the sky; every man fought in his own defence, and scarcely a hundred remained together. The squadron of the wife of Ching-yih overpowered us by numbers; our commander was not able to protect his lines, they were broken, and we lost fourteen ships.”

The next fight being very characteristically described, must be given entire in the words of our Chinese historian.

“Our men of war escorting some merchant ships, in the fourth moon of the same year, happened to meet the pirate chief nicknamed, ‘The jewel of all the crew,’ cruising at sea. The traders became exceedingly frightened, but our commander said: ‘This not being the flag of the widow Ching-yih, we are a match for them;

therefore we will attack and conquer them.' Then ensued a battle; they attacked each other with guns and stones, and many people were killed and wounded. The fighting ceased towards the evening, and began again next morning. The pirates and the men of war were very close to each other, and they boasted mutually about their strength and valour. It was a very hard fight; the sound of cannon, and the cries of the combatants, were heard some *le** distant. The traders remained at some distance; they saw the pirates mixing gunpowder in their beverage,—they looked instantly red about the face and the eyes, and then fought desperately. This fighting continued three days and nights incessantly; at last, becoming tired on both sides, they separated."

To understand this inglorious bulletin, the reader must remember that many of the combatants only handled bows and arrows, and pelted stones, and that Chinese powder and guns are both exceedingly bad. The bathos of the conclusion does somewhat remind one of the Irishman's despatch during the American war—"It was a bloody battle while it lasted; and the sergeant of marines lost his cartouche-box."

The pirates continuing their depredations, plundered and burned a number of towns and villages on the coast, and carried off a number of prisoners of both sexes. From one place alone, they carried off fifty-three women. At length they separated: Mistress Ching plundering in one place; Paou, in another; O-po-tae, in another, &c.

It was at this time that Mr. Glasspoole had the ill fortune to fall into their power. This gentleman, then an officer in the East India Company's ship the Marquis of

* *Le*, a Chinese mile. "I compute," says Bell, "five of their miles to be about two and a half English."

Ely, which was anchored under an island about twelve miles from Macao, was ordered to proceed to the latter place with a boat to procure a pilot. He left the ship in one of the cutters, with seven British seamen well armed, on the 17th September 1809. He reached Macao in safety, and having finished his business there and procured a pilot, returned towards the ship the following day. But, unfortunately, the ship had weighed anchor and was under sail, and in consequence of squally weather, accompanied with thick fogs, the boat could not reach her, and Mr. Glasspoole and his men and the pilot were left at sea, in an open boat. "Our situation," says that gentleman, "was truly distressing—night closing fast, with a threatening appearance, blowing fresh, with hard rain and a heavy sea; our boat very leaky, without a compass, anchor, or provisions, and drifting fast on a lee-shore, surrounded with dangerous rocks, and inhabited by the most barbarous pirates."

After suffering dreadfully for three whole days, Mr. Glasspoole, by the advice of the pilot, made for a narrow channel, where he presently discovered three large boats at anchor, which, on seeing the English boat, weighed and made sail towards it. The pilot told Mr. Glasspoole they were *Ladrones*, and that if they captured the boat, they would certainly put them all to death! After rowing tremendously for six hours they escaped these boats, but on the following morning falling in with a large fleet of the pirates, which the English mistook for fishing boats, they were captured.

"About twenty savage looking villains," says Mr. Glasspoole, "who were stowed at the bottom of a boat, leaped on board us. They were armed with a short sword in either hand, one of which they laid upon our necks, and pointed the other to our breasts, keeping their eyes fixed on their officer, waiting his signal to cut or

desist. Seeing we were incapable of making any resistance, the officer sheathed his sword, and the others immediately followed his example. They then dragged us into their boat, and carried us on board one of their junks, with the most savage demonstrations of joy, and, as we supposed, to torture and put us to a cruel death." When on board the junk they rifled the Englishmen, and brought heavy chains to chain them to the deck.

"At this time a boat came, and took me, with one of my men and the interpreter, on board the chief's vessel. I was then taken before the chief. He was seated on deck, in a large chair, dressed in purple silk, with a black turban on. He appeared to be about thirty years of age, a stout commanding looking man. He took me by the coat, and drew me close to him; then questioned the interpreter very strictly, asking him who we were, and what was our business in that part of the country. I told him to say we were Englishmen in distress, having been four days at sea without provisions. This he would not credit, but said we were bad men; and that he would put us all to death; and then ordered some men to put the interpreter to the torture until he confessed the truth. Upon this occasion, a Ladrone, who had been once to England and spoke a few words of English, came to the chief, and told him we were really Englishmen, and that we had plenty of money, adding that the buttons on my coat were gold. The chief then ordered us some coarse brown rice, of which we made a tolerable meal, having eaten nothing for nearly four days, except a few green oranges. During our repast, a number of Ladrones crowded round us, examining our clothes and hair, and giving us every possible annoyance. Several of them brought swords, and laid them on our necks, making signs that they would soon take us on shore, and cut us in pieces, which I am sorry to say was the fate of some

hundreds during my captivity. I was now summoned before the chief, who had been conversing with the interpreter; he said I must write to my captain, and tell him, if he did not send an hundred thousand dollars for our ransom, in ten days he would put us all to death."

After vainly expostulating to lessen the ransom, Mr. Glasspoole wrote the letter, and a small boat came alongside and took us to Macao.

"About six o'clock in the evening they gave us some rice and a little salt fish, which we ate, and they made signs for us to lie down on the deck to sleep; but such numbers of *Ladrones* were constantly coming from different vessels to see us, and examine our clothes and hair, they would not allow us a moment's quiet. They were particularly anxious for the buttons of my coat, which were new, and as they supposed gold. I took it off, and laid it on the deck to avoid being disturbed by them; it was taken away in the night, and I saw it on the next day stripped of its buttons."

Early in the night the fleet sailed, and anchored about one o'clock the following day in a bay under the island of Lantow, where the head admiral of *Ladrones* (our acquaintance Paou) was lying at anchor, with about two hundred vessels and a Portuguese brig they had captured a few days before, and the captain and part of the crew of which they had murdered. Early the next morning, a fishing boat came to enquire if they had captured an European boat: they came to the vessel the English were in.

"One of the boatmen spoke a few words of English, and told me he had a *Ladrone* pass, and was sent by our captain in search of us; I was rather surprised to find he had no letter. He appeared to be well acquainted with the chief, and remained in his cabin smoking opium, and playing cards all the day. In the evening I

was summoned with the interpreter before the chief. He questioned us in a much milder tone, saying, he now believed we were Englishmen, a people he wished to be friendly with ; and that if our captain would lend him seventy thousand dollars till he returned from his cruise up the river, he would repay him, and send us all to Macao. I assured him it was useless writing on those terms, and unless our ransom was speedily settled, the English fleet would sail, and render our enlargement altogether ineffectual. He remained determined, and said if it were not sent, he would keep us, and make us fight, or put us to death. I accordingly wrote, and gave my letter to the man belonging to the boat before mentioned. He said he could not return with an answer in less than five days. The chief now gave me the letter I wrote when first taken. I have never been able to ascertain his reasons for detaining it, but suppose he dared not negotiate for our ransom without orders from the head admiral, who I understood was sorry at our being captured. He said the English ships would join the Mandarins and attack them."

While the fleet lay here, one night the Portuguese who were left in the captured brig murdered the *Ladrones* that were on board of her, cut the cables, and fortunately escaped through the darkness of the night.

"At daylight the next morning, the fleet, amounting to above five hundred sail of different sizes, weighed, to proceed on their intended cruise up the rivers, to levy contributions on the towns and villages. It is impossible to describe what were my feelings at this critical time, having received no answers to my letters, and the fleet under way to sail—hundreds of miles up a country never visited by Europeans, there to remain probably for many months, which would render all opportunities of negotiating for our enlargement totally ineffectual ; as

the only method of communication is by boats that have a pass from the Ladrones, and they dare not venture above twenty miles from Macao, being obliged to come and go in the night, to avoid the mandarins ; and if these boats should be detected in having any intercourse with the Ladrones, they are immediately put to death, and all their relations, though they had not joined in the crime,* share in the punishment, in order that not a single person of their families should be left to imitate their crimes or revenge their death."

The following is a very touching incident in Mr. Glasspoole's narrative.

"Wednesday the 26th of September, at daylight, we passed in sight of our own ships, at anchor under the island of Chun Po. The chief then called me, pointed to the ships, and told the interpreter to tell us to look at them, for we should never see them again ! About noon we entered a river to the westward of the Bogue, three or four miles from the entrance. We passed a large town situate on the side of a beautiful hill, which is tributary to the Ladrones ; the inhabitants saluted them with songs as they passed."

After committing numerous robberies, sacking towns, burning vessels and carrying off women, &c. Mr. G. says:—

"On the 28th of October, I received a letter from Captain Kay, brought by a fisherman, who had told him he would get us all back for three thousand dollars. He advised me to offer three thousand, and if not accepted, extend it to four ; but not farther, as it was bad policy to offer much at first : at the same time assuring

* That the whole family must suffer for the crime of one individual, seems to be the most cruel and foolish law of the whole Chinese criminal code.

me we should be liberated, let the ransom be what it would. I offered the chief the three thousand, which he disdainfully refused, saying he was not to be played with; and unless they sent ten thousand dollars, and two large guns, with several casks of gunpowder, he would soon put us all to death. I wrote to Captain Kay, and informed him of the chief's determination, requesting, if an opportunity offered, to send us a shift of clothes, for which it may be easily imagined we were much distressed, having been seven weeks without a change; although constantly exposed to the weather, and of course frequently wet.

"On the first of November, the fleet sailed up a narrow river, and anchored at night within two miles of a town called Little Whampoa. In front of it was a small fort, and several mandarin vessels lying in the harbour. The chief sent the interpreter to me, saying, I must order my men to make cartridges and clean their muskets, ready to go on shore in the morning. I assured the interpreter I should give the men no such orders, that they must please themselves. Soon after the chief came on board, threatening to put us all to a cruel death if we refused to obey his orders. For my own part I remained determined, and advised the men not to comply, as I thought by making ourselves useful we should be accounted too valuable. A few hours afterwards he sent to me again, saying, that if myself and the quartermaster would assist them at the great guns, that if also the rest of the men went on shore and succeeded in taking the place, he would then take the money offered for our ransom, and give them twenty dollars for every Chinaman's head they cut off. To these proposals we cheerfully acceded, in hopes of facilitating our deliverance."

Preferring the killing of Chinese to the living with

pirates, our English tars therefore landed next day with about three thousand ruffians. Once in the fight, they seem to have done their work *con amore* ! and to have battled it as if they had been pirates themselves. Our friend, the Chinese historian, indeed, mentions a foreigner engaged in battle and doing great execution with a little musket, and sets him down, naturally enough, as "a foreign pirate !"

After recapitulating several battles which he witnessed, Mr. Glasspoole continues—"On the 2d of December I received a letter from Lieutenant Maughn, commander of the Honourable Company's cruiser the Antelope, saying that he had the ransom on board, and had been three days cruising after us, and wished me to settle with the chief on the securest method of delivering it. The chief agreed to send us in a small gunboat till we came within sight of the Antelope ; then the compradore's boat was to bring the ransom and receive us. I was so agitated at receiving this joyful news, that it was with considerable difficulty I could scrawl about two or three lines to inform Lieutenant Maughn of the arrangements I had made. We were all so deeply affected by the gratifying tidings, that we seldom closed our eyes, but continued watching day and night for the boat.

"On the 6th, she returned with Lieutenant Maughn's answer, saying, he would respect any single boat ; but would not allow the fleet to approach him. The chief then, according to his first proposal, ordered a gunboat to take us, and with no small degree of pleasure we left the Ladrone fleet about four o'clock in the afternoon. At one P. M. saw the Antelope under all sail, standing towards us. The Ladrone boat immediately anchored, and despatched the compradore's boat for the ransom, saying, that if she approached nearer, they would return to the fleet ; and they were just weighing when she shortened

sail, and anchored about two miles from us. The boat did not reach her till late in the afternoon, owing to the tide being strong against her. She received the ransom, and left the *Antelope* just before dark. A mandarin boat that had been lying concealed under the land, and watching their manœuvres, gave chase to her, and was within a few fathoms of taking her, when she saw a light, which the *Ladrones* answered, and the mandarin hauled off. Our situation was now a most critical one; the ransom was in the hands of the *Ladrones*, and the compradore dared not return with us for fear of a second attack from the mandarin boat. The *Ladrones* would not remain till morning, so we were obliged to return with them to the fleet. In the morning the chief inspected the ransom, which consisted of the following articles: two bales of superfine scarlet cloth; two chests of opium; two casks of gunpowder; and a telescope; the rest in dollars. He objected to the telescope not being new; and said he should detain one of us till another was sent, or a hundred dollars in lieu of it. The compradore, however, agreed with him for the hundred dollars. Every thing being at length settled, the chief ordered two gunboats to convey us near the *Antelope*; we saw her just before dusk, when the *Ladrone* boats left us. We had the inexpressible pleasure of arriving on board the *Antelope* at seven P. M., where we were most cordially received, and heartily congratulated on the safe and happy deliverance from a miserable captivity, which we had endured for eleven weeks and three days.

(Signed) RICHARD GLASSPOOLE.

"China, December 8th, 1809."

The following notes added to Mr. Glasspoole's very interesting account of these Eastern pirates, will show how ill he fared during his detention among them, and

that with all their impunity of plundering, their lives were but wretched and beastly.

“The Ladrones have no settled residence on shore, but live constantly in their vessels. The after part is appropriated to the captain and his wives; he generally has five or six. With respect to conjugal rights they are religiously strict; no person is allowed to have a woman on board, unless married to her according to their laws. Every man is allowed a small berth, about four feet square, where he stows with his wife and family. From the number of souls crowded in so small a space, it must naturally be supposed they are horribly dirty, which is evidently the case, and their vessels swarm with all kinds of vermin. Rats in particular, which they encourage to breed, and eat them as great delicacies;* in fact, there are very few creatures they will not eat. During our captivity we lived three weeks on caterpillars boiled with rice. They are much addicted to gambling, and spend all their leisure hours at cards and smoking opium.”

At the time of Mr. Glasspoole's liberation, the pirates were at the height of their power; after such repeated victories over the mandarin ships, they had set at nought the Imperial allies—the Portuguese, and not only the coast, but the rivers of the celestial empire seemed to be at their discretion—and yet their formidable association did not many months survive this event. It was not, however, defeat, that reduced it to the obedience of the laws. On the contrary, that extraordinary woman, the widow of Ching-yih, and the daring Paou, were victorious and more powerful than ever, when dissensions broke out among the pirates themselves. Ever since the favour of the chieftainess had elevated Paou to the gene-

* The Chinese in Canton only eat a particular sort of rat, which is very large and of a whitish colour.

ral command, there had been enmity and altercations between him and the chief O-po-tae, who commanded one of the flags or divisions of the fleet; and it was only by the deference and respect they both owed to Ching-yih's widow, that they had been prevented from turning their arms against each other long before.

At length, when the brave Paou was surprised and cooped up by a strong blockading force of the emperor's ships, O-po-tae showed all his deadly spite, and refused to obey the orders of Paou, and even of the chieftainess, which were, that he should sail to the relief of his rival. Paou, with his bravery and usual good fortune, broke through the blockade, but when he came in contact with O-po-tae, his rage was too violent to be restrained.

O-po-tae at first pleaded that his means and strength had been insufficient to do what had been expected of him, but concluded by saying,—“Am I bound to come and join the forces of Paou?”

“Would you then separate from us?” cried Paou, more enraged than ever.

O-po-tae answered: “I will not separate myself.”

Paou:—“Why then do you not obey the orders of the wife of Ching-yih and my own? What is this else than separation, that you do not come to assist me, when I am surrounded by the enemy? I have sworn it that I will destroy thee, wicked man, that I may do away with this soreness on my back.”

The angry words of Paou were followed by others, and then by blows. Paou, though at the moment far inferior in force, first began the fight, and ultimately sustained a sanguinary defeat, and the loss of sixteen vessels. Our loathing for this cruel, detestable race, must be increased by the fact, that the victors massacred all the prisoners—or three hundred men.

This was the death blow to the confederacy which had

so long defied the emperor's power, and which might have effected his dethronement. O-po-tae dreading the vengeance of Paou and his mistress, Ching-yih's widow, whose united forces would have quintupled his own, gained over his men to his views, and proffered a submission to government, on condition of free pardon, and a proper provision for all.

The government that had made so many lamentable displays of its weakness, was glad to make an unreal parade of its mercy. It was but too happy to grant all the conditions instantly, and, in the fulsome language of its historians, "feeling that compassion is the way of heaven—that it is the right way to govern by righteousness—it therefore redeemed these pirates from destruction, and pardoned their former crimes."

O-po-tae, however, had hardly struck his free flag, and the pirates were hardly in the power of the Chinese, when it was proposed by many that they should all be treacherously murdered. The governor happened to be more honourable and humane, or probably, only more politic than those who made this foul proposal—he knew that such a bloody breach of faith would for ever prevent the pirates still in arms from voluntarily submitting; he knew equally well, even weakened as they were by O-po-tae's defection, that the government could not reduce them by force, and he thought by keeping his faith with them, he might turn the force of those who had submitted against those who still held out, and so destroy the pirates with the pirates. Consequently the eight thousand men, it had been proposed to cut off in cold blood, were allowed to remain uninjured, and their leader, O-po-tae, having changed his name to that of Heo Been, or "The Lustre of Instruction," was elevated to the rank of an imperial officer.

The widow of Ching-yih, and her favourite Paou, con-

tinued for some months to pillage the coast, and to beat the Chinese and mandarins' troops and ships, and seemed almost as strong as before the separation of O-po-tae's flag. But that example was probably operating in the minds of many of the outlaws, and finally the lawless heroine herself, who was the spirit that kept the complicate body together, seeing that O-po-tae had been made a government officer, and that he continued to prosper, began also to think of making her submission.

"I am," said she, "ten times stronger than O-po-tae, and government will perhaps, if I submit, act towards me as they have done with O-po-tae."

A rumour of her intentions having reached shore, the mandarins sent off a certain Chow, a doctor of Macaò, "who," says the historian, "being already well acquainted with the pirates, did not need any introduction," to enter on preliminaries with them.

When the worthy practitioner presented himself to Paou, that friend concluded he had been committing some crime, and had come for safety to that general *refugium peccatorum*, the pirate fleet.

The doctor explained, and assured the chief, that if he would submit, government was inclined to treat him and his far more favourably and more honourably than O-po-tae. But if he continued to resist, not only a general arming of all the coast and the rivers, but O-po-tae was to proceed against him.

At this part of his narrative our Chinese historian is again so curious, that I shall quote his words at length.

"When Fci-heung-Chow came to Paou, he said : 'Friend Paou, do you know why I come to you ?'

"Paou.—'Thou hast committed some crime and comest to me for protection ?'

"Chow.—'By no means.'

“ Paou.—‘ You will then know, how it stands concerning the report about our submission, if it is true or false?’ ”

“ Chow.—‘ You are again wrong here, sir. What are you in comparison with O-po-tae?’ ”

“ Paou.—‘ Who is bold enough to compare me with O-po-tae?’ ”

“ Chow.—‘ I know very well that O-po-tae could not come up to you, sir; but I mean only, that since O-po-tae has made his submission, since he has got his pardon and been created a government officer,—how would it be, if you with your whole crew should also submit, and if his excellency should desire to treat you in the same manner, and to give you the same rank as O-po-tae? Your submission would produce more joy to government than the submission of O-po-tae. You should not wait for wisdom to act wisely; you should make up your mind to submit to the government with all your followers. I will assist you in every respect, it would be the means of securing your own happiness and the lives of all your adherents.’ ”

“ Chang-paou remained like a statue without motion, and Fei-heung Chow went on to say: ‘ You should think about this affair in time, and not stay till the last moment. Is it not clear that O-po-tae, since you could not agree together, has joined government? He being enraged against you, will fight, united with the forces of the government, for your destruction; and who could help you, so that you might overcome your enemies? If O-po-tae could before vanquish you quite alone, how much more can he now when he is united with government? O-po-tae will then satisfy his hatred against you, and you yourself will soon be taken either at Wei-chow or at Neaou-chow. If the merchant vessels of Hw-y-chaou, the boats of Kwang-chow, and all the fishing vessels, unite together to surround and attack you in the open

sea, you will certainly have enough to do. But even supposing they should not attack you, you will soon feel the want of provisions to sustain you and all your followers. It is always wisdom to provide before things happen; stupidity and folly never think about future events. It is too late to reflect upon events when things have happened; you should, therefore, consider this matter in time!"

Paou, after being closeted for some time with his mistress, Ching-yih's widow, who gave her high permission for him to make arrangements with Doctor Chow, said he would repair with his fleet to the Bocca Tigris, and there communicate personally with the organs of government.

After two visits had been paid to the pirate fleets by two inferior mandarins, who carried the imperial proclamation of free pardon, and who, at the order of Ching-yih's widow, were treated to a sumptuous banquet by Paou, the governor-general of the province went himself in one vessel to the pirates' ships, that occupied a line of ten *le*, off the mouth of the river.

As the governor approached, the pirates hoisted their flags, played on their instruments, and fired their guns, so that the smoke rose in clouds, and then bent sail to meet him. On this the dense population that were ranged thousands after thousands along the shore, to witness the important reconciliation, became sorely alarmed, and the governor-general seems to have had a strong inclination to run away. But in brief space of time, the long dreaded widow of Ching-yih, supported by her lieutenant Paou, and followed by three other of her principal commanders, mounted the side of the governor's ship, and rushed through the smoke to the spot where his excellency was stationed; where they fell on their hands and knees, shed tears, knocked their

heads on the deck before him, and received his gracious pardon, and promises for future kind treatment. They then withdrew satisfied, having promised to give in a list of their ships, and of all else they possessed, within three days.

But the sudden apparition of some large Portuguese ships, and some government war junks, made the pirates suspect treachery. They immediately set sail, and the negotiations were interrupted for several days.

They were at last concluded by the boldness of their female leader. "If the governor general," said this heroine, "a man of the highest rank, could come to us quite alone, why should not I, a mean woman, go to the officers of government? If there be danger in it, I take it all on myself; no person among you need trouble himself about me—my mind is made up, and I will go to Canton!"

Paou said—"If the widow of Ching-yih goes, we must fix a time for her return. If this pass without our obtaining certain information, we must collect all our forces, and go before Canton: this is my opinion as to what ought to be done; comrades, let me hear yours!"

The pirates then, struck with the intrepidity of their chieftainess, and loving her more than ever, answered, "Friend Paou, we have heard thy opinion, but we think it better to wait for the news here, on the water, than to send the wife of Ching-yih alone to be killed." Nor would they allow her to leave the fleet.

Matters were in this state of indecision, when the two inferior mandarins who had before visited the pirates, ventured out to repeat their visit. These officers protested no treachery had been intended, and pledged themselves, that if the widow of Ching-yih would repair to the governor, she would be kindly received, and every thing settled to their hearts' satisfaction.

With this, in the language of our old ballads, upspoke Mistress Ching. "You say well, gentlemen! and I will go myself to Canton with some other of our ladies, accompanied by you!" And accordingly, she and a number of the pirates' wives with their children, went fearlessly to Canton, arranged every thing, and found they had not been deceived. The fleet soon followed. On its arrival every vessel was supplied with pork and with wine, and every man (in lieu, it may be supposed, of his share of the vessels, and plundered property he resigned) received at the same time a bill for a certain quantity of money. Those who wished it, could join the military force of government for pursuing the remaining pirates; and those who objected, dispersed and withdrew in the country. "This is the manner in which the great red squadron of the pirates was pacified."

The valiant Paou, following the example of his rival O-po-tae, entered into the service of government, and proceeded against such of his former associates and friends as would not accept the pardon offered them. There was some hard fighting, but the two renegadoes successively took the chief Shih Url, forced the redoubtable captain, styled "The Scourge of the Eastern ocean," to surrender himself, drove "Frog's Meal," another dreadful pirate, to Manilla, and finally, and within a few months, destroyed or dissipated the "wasps of the ocean" altogether.

"From that period," saith our Chinese historian, in conclusion, "ships began to pass and repass in tranquillity. All became quiet on the rivers, and tranquil on the four seas. People lived in peace and plenty. The country began to assume a new appearance. Men sold their arms and bought oxen to plough their fields; they burned sacrifices, said prayers on the tops of the hills, and rejoiced themselves by singing behind screens during day

time"—and, (grand climax to all !) the governor of the province, in consideration of his valuable services in the pacification of the pirates, was allowed by an edict of the "Son of Heaven," to wear peacocks' feathers with two eyes !

THE END.



